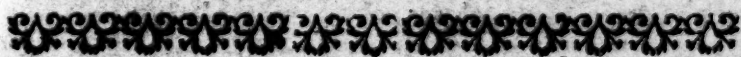




AN
EXPOSTULATORY
LETTER
FROM
J. J. ROUSSEAU,
Citizen of *Geneva*,
TO
CHRISTOPHER de BEAUMONT,
Archbishop of *Paris*.



EXHIBITION OF THE

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EXHIBITION

OF THE

FROM

THE



BY

TO

CHRISTOPHER & BEAUMONT

Architects of Town

OF THE

1276 3^{me} serie.

AN

EXPOSTULATORY

LETTER

FROM

J. J. ROUSSEAU, *k*

Citizen of Geneva,

TO

CHRISTOPHER de BEAUMONT,
Archbishop of Paris.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

The MANDATE of the said Prelate,

AND ALSO

The Proceedings of the Parliament of Paris,
relative to the new Treatise on Education,
intituled EMILIUS.

*Da veniam si quid liberior dixi, non ad contumeliam tuam, sed ad
defensionem meam. Præsumpsi enim de gravitate et prudentiâ tuâ,
quia potes considerare quantum mihi respondendi necessitatem im-
posueris.*

AUG. Epist. 238. ad PASCENT.

L O N D O N :

Printed for T. BECKET and P. A. DE HONDT,
in the STRAND.

M.DCC.LXIII.

EXPOSITORY LETTER

FROM

J. J. ROUSSEAU,

Citizen of Geneva,

TO

CHRISTOPHER de BEAUMONT,

Archbishop of Paris.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

The MANDATE of the said Prelate,



The Process relative to the said Prelate on Education, inserted here.

De veritate & qualitate huius libri, non est controversandum, sed ad
descriptorem ipsum, Præfatus & omnes de quibuslibet præfatus
eius potest cognoscere quantum ad hunc respectum, in officio
Auct. Epist. 178. ad Venerab.

L O N D O N :

Printed for T. Beckett and P. A. De Hondt,
in the Strand.

M.DCC.LXIII.



PROCEEDINGS

In the

PARLIAMENT of PARIS.



ENTERED, this day, the officers of our Lord the King; M. Omer-Joly de Fleury, advocate of our said Lord the King, presenting an information to the court, against a work intituled *Emilius*, &c. by J. J. Rousseau, citizen of Geneva; in words, and to the effect following:

That the said work appears to be composed only with a view to re-establish natural religion; the author labouring, in the plan of education he affects to pursue with his pupil, to illustrate and recommend that criminal system.

That the author affects to instruct his said pupil according to nature, which he makes his only guide in the formation of his moral man; that he regards all religions as equally salutary, and as having all their peculiar reasons in the climate, government, genius of the people, or other local cause, which makes the one preferable to another only, according to the circumstances of time and place.

That he would have man confine himself to that kind of knowlege which instinct alone prompts him to pursue; pretending

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that

that the passions are the principal instruments of our preservation, and asserting that men may be saved without believing in God, on the supposition of an invincible ignorance, which he maintains some persons may lie under with regard to the deity, and which will excuse their unbelief. That according to the principles of this writer, we should be directed in the choice of a religion by reason only; by the dictates of which we should also leave the mode of that worship which mankind are to pay to the supreme Being; whom the author affects to honour, in speaking with impiety of those external ceremonies of religion, which that Being hath established, or the Church hath prescribed, under the direction and influence of his holy Spirit.

That, in consequence of this system of admitting no other than natural religion, whatever form it assume among different people, he hath endeavoured to disprove the truth of the holy scriptures and prophecies, the certainty of the miracles contained in the sacred writings, the infallibility of revelation, and the authority of the church: That, in recurring on every occasion to this natural religion, he undertakes to justify not only all religions indiscriminately, pretending that salvation may be found in all, but even the infidelity and scepticism of all those, whom we may in vain endeavour to convince of the divinity of Jesus Christ, and the truth of the Christian Religion; which alone hath God for its author; and with regard to which he carries his blasphemy so far, as to treat
it

it as ridiculous and contradictory, and to inculcate a sacrilegious indifference for its mysteries and tenets; all which he endeavours to destroy.

That such are the impious and detestable principles which the writer proposes to establish in his said treatise; throughout which he subjects religion to the examination of reason, which can establish only mere human creeds, and which admits of no other truths, or dogmas in religion, than such as it may please the understanding, left to its own light, or rather its own darkness, to receive or reject.

That to these impieties, the author hath added many indecent details and illustrations directly contrary to modesty and decorum, as well as pretensions tending odiously and falsely to mis-represent the sovereign authority; to destroy the principles of that obedience which is due to it, and to lessen the respect and affection of the subjects for their kings.

That the informants conceive these instances sufficient to give the court an idea of the work in question: that the maxims which are scattered throughout, unite to form a chimerical system, as impracticable in the execution, as absurd and criminal in its design: that subjects educated in such maxims could not fail of being prejudiced in favour of scepticism and toleration, of being abandoned to their passions, and devoted to the pleasures of sense; of becoming deaf to every thing but the voice of nature, and of substituting instead of the noble desire

of true glory, this pernicious phrenzy of singularity. What rules for the formation of manners ! What members of church and state must such children prove who are educated in principles that are equally shocking to the citizen and christian !

That the author of the said book, not having scrupled to set his name to the work, cannot be too expeditiously prosecuted ; for that it is of importance, since he is known, that justice should make an example as well of the writer, as of those who may be discovered to have assisted, either in the printing or distributing a work that deserves, together with its author and publisher, to be treated with the greatest severity.

That such is the substance of the written information, now left with a copy of the book, in court. On this the officers retired.

The matter of the said information, having been taken into consideration, it is resolved by the court, that the said printed book, entitled *Emilius*, &c. be torn to pieces and burnt, in the court of the palace, at the foot of the grand stairs, by the common executioner. All persons possessed of copies of the said book, are also enjoined to bring them to the register of the court, in order to have them suppressed. And all Booksellers are expressly forbidden to print, sell or publish the said book ; as are also all hawkers and others, either to vend or distribute the same, under pain of being immediately prosecuted to the utmost severity of the law.

It

It is also ordered by the court, at the request of the King's Attorney General, that information be taken before the reporting counsel, of all such writers as may be found in Paris, and before the lieutenants-criminal of their respective bailiwicks, of all such writers as may offer, without the said city, to give evidence against the author, printers, or venders of the said book. That the said information when taken, be communicated to the King's Attorney-General; to be proceeded on as he shall judge proper, or the court order relating thereto. It is further ordered, that the said J. J. Rousseau, mentioned in the title page of the said book, be in the mean time apprehended, taken, and committed to the prisons of the Conciergerie of the palace, in order to be heard and interrogated before the said reporting counsel, touching the matter of the said book; and to answer to the information which the Attorney-General hath taken against him: and in case the said J. J. Rousseau cannot be apprehended and taken, on search after his person, for fourteen days, that his effects be seized, and an inventory thereof be taken, and lodged in the hands of the Commissaries appointed for that purpose; till the said Rousseau shall appear agreeable to this order. And to these purposes it is ordered, that a copy of the said book be left with the register of this court, to serve for the instructions relative to the process. Ordered, lastly, that the present arret be printed, published, and stuck up

wherever it may be thought requisite. Done
in parliament, June 9, 1762.

Signed, Du Franc.

On Friday the 11th of June 1762, the
abovementioned book was torn to pieces, and
burnt at the foot of the great stair-case of the
palace, by the public executioner, in the pre-
sence of me Etienne Dagobert Ysabeau, one
of the three principal commissaries of the
great chamber, assisted by the two serjeants of
the court.

Signed Ysabeau.



THE



THE
M A N D A T E
OF THE
ARCHBISHOP OF PARIS ;

*Condemning the new Treatise on Education, entitled
Emilius, &c. by J. J. Rousseau, citizen of
Geneva.*

CHRISTOPHER de Beaumont, by the grace of
God and by favour of the holy apostolic
see, archbishop of Paris, duke of St. Cloud,
peer of France, commander of the order of
the Holy Ghost, patron of the Sorbonne, &c.
To all the faithful of our diocese, health and
benediction.

St. Paul, my dear brethren, hath foretold
that perilous times should come, in which
men should be lovers of themselves, proud,
blasphemers, unholy, false accusers, high
minded, lovers of pleasures more than of God,
men of corrupt minds, reprobates concerning
the faith *. And in what times hath this pre-
diction been more literally fulfilled than in the
present ! Infidelity, encouraged by the passions,
presents itself in every shape, in order to ac-

* Tim. II. Chap. iii. v. 1, 4, 8.

commodate itself in some measure to persons of all ages, characters and conditions of life. Sometimes, in order to insinuate itself into the minds of those who are captivated with trifles, it assumes a light, agreeable and frivolous stile; hence we see a numerous tribe of romances, equally impious and obscene, whose sole end is to divert the imagination, with a view to seduce the understanding and to corrupt the heart. Sometimes, assuming an air of sublimity, it affects to recur to the first principles of human knowledge, and pretends to deduce from thence authority for casting off a yoke said to be disgraceful to humanity, even that of divinity itself. Sometimes it furiously declaims against religious zeal, and in a rage preaches up universal toleration. And again, sometimes, uniting all the different modes of language, it mingles gravity with mirth, the maxims of purity with those of charity, truth with error, and religion with blasphemy; endeavouring, in a word, to reconcile light with darkness, and Christ with Belial. This my dear brethren, appears in a particular manner the object of a recent publication entitled *Emilius &c.* A writer hath here started up, who, educated in the midst of error, is full of the language of philosophy, though no true philosopher: possessed of a multiplicity of knowledge, which nevertheless hath not served to enlighten his understanding, he hath made use of it to darken the understanding of others; he is given up to paradoxes both in opinion and practice, uniting simplicity of manners with ostentation of doctrine,

trine, a zeal for ancient maxims with a passion for establishing the most singular novel-
ties, the obscurity of retirement with the de-
sire of being known to the whole world. We
have seen his invectives against those very sci-
ences which he himself cultivated: we hear
him acknowledge the excellence of the gospel,
while he is endeavouring to depreciate its tenets,
and see him describing the beauty of virtue, at
the same time that he is striving to extinguish
the love of it in the hearts of his readers. He
hath assumed the preceptorship of human kind
in order to deceive them; he hath erected him-
self into a public monitor, to lead the world
astray; and hath played the oracle of the age
in order to compleat its destruction. In a
former treatise, on the inequality of mankind,
he hath reduced man to a level with the brutes;
in another production still more recent he hath
insinuated all the poison of inordinate pleasure,
under pretence of prohibiting it: and in the
present he takes advantage of the earliest mo-
ments of life, to establish in the mind of man
the maxims of irreligion and infidelity.

What a horrid enterprise! my dear bre-
thren! the education of youth is one of the
most important objects of the zeal and solici-
tude of the pastors of the church. We are
sensible that, in order to reform the world, as
far as the weakness and corruption of our na-
ture will permit, it would be sufficient to ob-
serve, under the direction and impressions of
grace, the dawnings of human reason, and to
direct it in the way that leads to all truth.
By such means, the mind, as yet exempt from
pre-

prejudice, may be put for ever on its guard against error ; and the heart as yet a stranger to the violent passions, may receive impressions of every virtue. But to whom doth it more properly belong, than to us and our fellow labourers in the ministry, thus to watch over the early progress of christian youth ; to furnish them with the spiritual milk of the word, so that they may grow in grace* ; to prepare them betimes, by salutary exhortations, to be sincere worshippers of the true God, faithful subjects to their king, and men worthy to become the support and ornament of their country.

Now the author of *Emilius*, my dear brethren, hath laid down a plan of education, which, so far from being consistent with christianity, is not even calculated to form either good citizens or good men. Under the vain pretence of restoring man to himself, and educating his pupil agreeable to nature, he assumes as a maxim, an assertion contradictory not only to the doctrines of religion, but also to the experience of all ages and nations. " We lay it down, says he, as an incontestible " maxim, that the first emotions of nature, " are always right ; and that there is no original perversity in the human heart." How contradictory is all this to the doctrines of the holy scripture and the church, respecting the change made in our nature by the fall ! In this maxim, we lose sight of that divine ray, which discovers to us the mystery of our own hearts.

* 1 Pet. Chap. ii. v. 2.

Yes, my dear brethren, we find within us a striking mixture of greatness and meanness, of a passion for truth, and a love for error, of an inclination to virtue and a tendency to vice : an astonishing contrast, which, disconcerting the pagan philosophers, left them to blunder on in vain speculations ! A contrast, of which revelation discloses the source, in the deplorable disobedience of our first parents ! In consequence of their defection it is, that man finds himself drawn by a fatal tendency to vice ; and how is he to resist and stand against it if his infancy be not conducted by preceptors, replete with attention, virtue, and prudence ; and if, during the whole course of his life, he doth not, under the protection, and by the grace of God, make continual and forcible efforts against it ? Alas ! my dear brethren, in spite of the most careful and virtuous education, in spite of the most encouraging promises and dreadful menaces of religion, the failings of youth are still too frequent, too numerous ! Into what errors, into what excesses, do they not, when left alone, precipitate themselves ? The torrent breaks in upon them, in spite of the strongest dykes that may be thrown up to oppose it : what would be the case, then, if no obstacle were raised to break its efforts and divert its force ?

The author of *Emilius*, who professes to be of no religion, points out the way, nevertheless, without designing it, which leads infallibly to true religion. “ How shall we, says he, who, on all occasions pretend to cast off the yoke of authority ; we who pay no regard

to opinion; who would teach our pupil nothing but what he might have learnt himself, in any country; in what religion shall we educate Emilius? To what sect shall we unite the man of nature? The answer appears to me very simple; we shall unite him neither to one nor another, but place him in a proper situation, and qualify him to make choice of that which the best use of his reason may induce him to adopt."

Would to God, my dear brethren, this object had been attained! Had the author really qualified his pupil to make choice of that religion, which the best use of his reason would have induced him to adopt, he would infallibly have prepared him for receiving the doctrines of christianity. For certain it is, my dear brethren, that the light of nature conducts to the light of the gospel; and the duty of a Christian is indeed a *reasonable* service*. In fact, if the best use of our reason does not lead us to the christian revelation, our faith is vain, and our hope of none effect. But, in what manner you may say, doth the best use of our reason, conduct us to the inestimable blessing of faith, and from thence to the precious assurance of salvation? It is to reason itself, that we may safely appeal. If we acknowledge a God, our great concern is next to know whether he hath condescended to speak to mankind, in another manner than by the works of nature. To determine this, we must examine if the evidence of the facts, on which

* Rom. xii. 1.

revelation is founded, be not superior to all the efforts of the most artful chicanery.

Infidelity hath often attempted to invalidate the evidence of these facts, and as often hath been convinced of its impotence. God hath borne witness of himself in the holy scriptures, and this testimony is most worthy of belief. What remains, therefore, for a man who makes the best use of his reason, but to acquiesce in this testimony? It is thy grace, O Lord! which compleats this work of illumination; it is that which determines the will, which forms the heart of the christian; but it is the display of its evidence, and the force of its motives, that previously employ and purify the understanding; and in this work, not less noble than indispensable, consists that best use of our reason, which the author of *Emilius* undertakes to speak of, without having any fixed or certain idea concerning it.

In order that a youth should possess the requisite docility to receive his tutor's instructions, this author would have him be destitute of every principle of religion. His reason, for which extraordinary document is this. "To know good from evil, and to be sensible of the duties of a man, is not the province of a child. --- I should as soon, adds he, require a child to be five feet high, as to have judgment at ten years of age." Doubtless, my dear brethren, the human understanding hath its progress, and is improved by degrees; but doth it thence follow, that, a child at ten years of age, should not know the difference between good and evil; that he should con-
found

sound prudence with folly, good nature with
 cruelty, and virtue with vice? May he not
 be sensible at that age, that obedience to his
 parents is a virtue and disobedience a vice?
 To assert this, my dear brethren, is to calum-
 niate human nature, in supposing it capable
 of a degree of stupidity, to which it is a stran-
 ger. "Every child who believes in God,
 says this author, is an idolator or an anthro-
 pomorphite." But, if it be an idolator, it must
 believe in many gods, and attribute the divine
 nature to insensible images. If it be only an
 anthropomorphite, it invests the true God with
 a corporeal form. Now we can suppose nei-
 ther the one nor the other of a child who is
 educated a christian. Its education may
 possibly be deficient in this particular; but it
 is highly unjust to impute that to religion,
 which is only owing to the defects of in-
 struction. Add to this, that it cannot be ex-
 pected a boy ten years of age should be a phi-
 losopher; hence, though he may be well
 taught, he may but ill explain himself; but,
 when we teach him that the deity is of a dif-
 ferent nature from objects of sense; that, pos-
 sessed of infinite intelligence, and supreme
 power, it executes whatever it pleases, we
 certainly give him such a notion of God, as is
 adapted to his understanding. It is not to be
 doubted that an atheist might easily perplex
 and confound such a young believer with his
 artful sophisms: but not all his address can
 make it appear that, when a child so instruct-
 ed, believes in God, he is nothing more than
 an idolator or anthropomorphite; that is to
 say,

say, that he believes only in the existence of a chimera.

But this author, my dear brethren, goes still farther, and denies that even a young man of fifteen is capacitated to believe in God. Man at that age, therefore, must be supposed not to know whether there is a God or not; it is in vain the works of nature display the glory of their creator, he understands not their expressive language. It must be supposed that he exists without knowing to whom he owes existence; and that reason itself contributes to involve him in this ignorance and darkness. It is thus, my dear brethren, that blind impiety endeavours to darken, with the clouds of obscurity, the torch which religion presents to mankind in every period of human life. St. Augustine reasoned justly on other principles, when, in speaking of his early years, he said, "I fell, at that time, Lord, into the hands of those, who are careful to call on thy name; and comprehended by their discourses concerning thee, and agreeable to the capacity of my tender years, that thou wert something great, and that, although invisible, and removed beyond the reach of our senses, thou couldst hear our prayers and relieve us. Hence I began, from my very infancy, to address thee by prayer, and to regard thee as my protector and my support; the earliest employment of my tongue being to call on thy holy name *."

* Lib. I. Confess. chap. ix.

Let us go on, my dear brethren, to the farther unaccountable paradoxes of the author of *Emilius*. Let us see whether, after having reduced young persons to such a state of profound ignorance with respect to the attributes of the Deity, he will admit them to know more of themselves? Do they know whether they are possessed of a soul distinct from this body? Or do they look on themselves as beings purely material and subject to the laws of mechanism? The author of *Emilius*, doubts whether it be time to teach a pupil even of eighteen years of age, that he hath a soul; pretending that "if he learns it sooner he runs a risk of never knowing it so long as he lives:" but will he not admit that youth may be sensible of their moral duties? No. If we believe our author, "There are none but physical objects, that will interest children, particularly those whose vanity is not yet excited, and that are not corrupted by the poison of prejudice.

Agreeable to these notions, he would have all the pains we take in the earlier part of education confined to what is material and terrestrial in man. Exercise, says he, their bodies, their organs, their natural forces; but keep the soul as inactive as possible.

This mental indolence and inactivity appears to him necessary, in order to dispose the mind to receive those errors he means to inculcate. But to think of instructing mankind in wisdom, at a season when their growing passions are most prevalent, is to inculcate it

in

in a manner which the author himself explodes.

How opposite, my dear brethren, is such a mode of education as this, to that which right reason and true religion unitedly dictate ! These require that a prudent and vigilant preceptor should be on the watch, as it were, to discover in the pupil, the first dawnings of intelligence, in order to captivate the understanding with the beauty of truth ; and for the first emotions of the heart, in order to engage it by the charms of virtue. How much better is it, in fact, to prevent obstacles, than to leave them to be surmounted ? How much is it to be feared, if the impressions of vice should precede the precepts of virtue, that men, when arrived at a certain age, will want both courage and will to resist vicious allurements ? Doth not happy experience daily demonstrate that, persons, educated in virtuous principles, recovering from the irregularities of an ill-spent youth, return at last to the salutary practice of those maxims they were taught in their childhood ?

We need not however be surprized, my dear brethren, that this author defers so long the knowledge of the existence of a Deity, when he doth not believe it necessary to salvation. " It is clear, (says he, in the character of an imaginary personage) that a man may, under some circumstances, live to grow old without believing in God, and yet he would not, for that reason, be deprived of his presence in the other world, if his unbelief was involuntary."

Observe,

Observe, my dear brethren, the author doth not mean here a person who is incapable of the use of reason, but merely one whose reason might have received no assistance from information. Now such a pretence is absurd, particularly on the system of this writer, who affirms human reason to be absolutely perfect. Saint Paul indeed assures us that, among the Pagan philosophers, many had, by the force of reason alone, arrived at the knowledge of the true God. "That which may be known of God, saith the apostle, is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead; so that they are without excuse; because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools *."

Now, if such was the crime of these men, who, being subjected by the prejudices of their education to the worship of idols, yet did not fail to attain to the knowledge of the true God; how can those, who have no such obstacles to surmount, be so innocent and blameless, as to merit the enjoyment of the presence of God in another life? how can they be excusable (possessed of right reason as our author supposes) in having contemplated during this life,

* Rom. i. 19.

the magnificent prospect of the universe, and yet remain ignorant of its creator, preserver and governor?

The same writer, my dear brethren, takes openly the side of scepticism with regard to creation and to the unity of God. Thus he makes the same imaginary personage say "I believe that the world is governed by a wise and powerful Will. I see it, or rather I feel it, and this is of importance for me to know: but is the world eternal, or is it created? Are things derived from one self-sufficient principle, or are they two or more? And what is their essence? Of all this I know nothing, nor do I see that it is of any consequence I should. — I give up all such idle disquisitions, which serve only to make me discontented with myself, are useless in practice, and superior to my understanding." What is it this daring author means to say? He believes the world to be governed by a wise and powerful will; he confesses it is of importance to him to know this; and yet he knows not, he says, whether things are derived from one self-existent principle or from many; and he pretends it is of little consequence whether he doth or no. If there be really a wise and powerful being who governs the world, is it conceivable that he should not be the sole principle, or efficient cause of all things? And can it be more important to know one than the other? What a contradiction! He knows nothing of the nature of God, and yet presently after he acknowledges this supreme being to be possessed of intelligence, power, will, and goodness; is

is not this to have an idea of the divine nature? The unity of God appears to him a futile and indeterminate question; as if the notion of a multiplicity of gods were not the greatest of all absurdities. *The plurality of Gods*, says Tertullian very expressively, tends to the *nullity of God*. To admit a God, is to admit a supreme and independent Being, to which all other beings are subordinate. This writer insinuates, therefore, that there are many gods.

It is not surprising, my dear brethren, that a man who gives into such errors respecting the Deity, should stand up to oppose the religion he hath revealed. According to this author, all revelations in general debase the Deity, in ascribing to him human passions. "So far from giving us enlightened notions of the Supreme Being, their particular tenets, in my opinion, give us the most obscure and confused ideas. To the inconceivable mysteries by which the Deity is hid from our view, they add the most absurd contradictions."

We may, with much greater justice, my dear brethren, reproach this author with inconsistency and absurdity. It is he who degrades the Deity, who confounds and debases our notions of that great being, by directly disputing his essence, and questioning his unity.

He is sensible that the truth of the Christian revelation is proved by facts; but concerning the miracles, constituting the principal evidence of that revelation, he cries out, "Who were witnesses to these miracles? — Men — Always human testimony! It is always men that

that tell me what other men have told them. What a number of these are constantly between me and the Deity!" To justify this complaint, my dear brethren, we ought to be able to affirm that a revelation must be false, when it is not made to every individual; we ought to be able to say, "God cannot require us to believe any thing he hath said, unless he had particularly addressed himself to us. But are there not an infinite number of facts, even prior to that of the Christian revelation, of which it would be absurd to doubt? Now by what means do we acquire the knowledge of these facts but by human testimony? By what other means did our author himself become acquainted with Sparta, with Athens, and with Rome, on whose laws, manners, and heroes he lavishes such extravagant encomiums? What a number of men there must have been between him and the events which relate to the origin and catastrophe of those antient republics! What a number of men between him and even the historians that have transmitted to us an account of those events! The scepticism of our author, therefore, with regard to this particular, is evidently founded on nothing but his own infidelity.

"What, if a man (says he, a little farther) should come and harangue us in the following manner: *I come, ye mortals, to announce to you the will of the Most High; acknowledge in my voice that of him who sent me. I command the sun to move backwards, the stars to change their places, the mountains to disappear, the waves to remain fixed on high, and the earth to wear a different aspect*

aspect. Who would not, at the sight of such miracles, immediately attribute them to the Author of nature ? ” Who would not think, my dear brethren, that a writer, who speaks in this manner, wanted only to be witness to a miracle, to become a Christian ? But hear what he says farther : “ The most important examination, after all, remains to be made into the doctrines delivered. — After proving the truth of the doctrine by the miracle, you are reduced to prove the truth of the miracle by that of the doctrine. — Now, what is to be done in this case ? There is but one step to be taken, to recur to reason, and leave miracles to themselves : better indeed had it been never to have had recourse to them.” That is, my dear brethren, as much as to say, “ Shew me a miracle, and I will believe ; and yet, when you have shewn me a miracle, I will not believe.” What inconsistency and absurdity ! But it is well known, that, in the affair of miracles, we do not admit that sophistry, with which the author of this treatise reproaches us.

When the doctrine is acknowledged to be divine, and to be founded on the truth of positive revelation, we make use of it, indeed, to judge of the miracles ; that is, to reject the pretended prodigies which impostors may set up against such doctrine. When the point in question is an entire new doctrine, which is said to be dictated by the spirit of God, miracles are produced as proofs of it : that is to say, the person who assumes the character of a missionary from the Most High, confirms his mission and the doctrines he preaches

preaches by miracles, which are the testimony of God himself. Thus the doctrine and the miracles are made use of respectively, according to the different points of view, in which they are placed, in the study or illustration of religion. But in this there is no abuse of argument, ridiculous sophistry, or absurd reasoning in a circle, as hath been frequently demonstrated by those who have undertaken to obviate this trite objection. Nor is it probable that the author of *Emilius* should be ignorant of these demonstrations: but, according to the plan he hath pursued, of throwing obscurity on all revealed religion and supernatural operations, he maliciously imputes to us such arguments as are disgraceful to reason. Thus he represents us as enthusiasts, whom a false and blinded zeal urges on to prove two principles, one by the other, without any diversity in the state of the question or method. Where, my good brethren, is that philosophical candour, that sincerity, of which this writer makes so great a boast?

Will it be believed, that, after having taken the greatest pains, to invalidate the human testimony of the christian revelation, the same author should pay it the most solemn and positive deference imaginable? To convince you, however, of his strange inconsistency, and at the same time to serve for your edification, my dear brethren, I shall cite the passages wherein he hath done this, in the plainest terms. "I will confess to you, says he, that the majesty of the scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the gospel hath its influence

fluence on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers with all their pomp of diction; how mean, how contemptible are they, compared with the scriptures! Is it possible that a book, at once so simple and sublime, should be merely the work of man? Is it possible that the sacred Personage, whose history it contains, should be himself a mere man? Do we find that he assumed the tone of an enthusiast, or ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in his manners! What an affecting gracefulness in his delivery! What sublimity in his maxims! What profound wisdom in his discourses! What presence of mind, what subtilty, what truth in his replies! How great the command over his passions! Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live and so die, without weakness and without ostentation? — Yes, if the life and death of Socrates are those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God. Shall we suppose the evangelic history a mere fiction? Indeed, my friend, it bears not the marks of fiction; on the contrary, the history of Socrates, which no body presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. — It is more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that one only should furnish the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality contained in the gospel; the marks of whose truth are so striking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more surprising character than the hero."

It

It would be difficult, my dear brethren, to express a more explicit homage to the authenticity of the Gospel : And yet the author acknowledges it only in consequence of human testimony. It is always men, that report what other men have reported. What a number of men between God and him ! Nothing can be more evident than that the writer here contradicts himself, and is confuted, on his own principle. How strangely infatuated therefore is this author, to add, " And yet, with all this, the same Gospel abounds with incredible relations, with circumstances repugnant to reason, and which it is impossible for a man of sense either to conceive or admit. What is to be done amidst all these contradictions ? Be modest and circumspect : Regard in silence what cannot be either disproved or comprehended, and humble thyself before the Supreme Being, who only knows the truth. Such is the involuntary scepticism in which I remain." But can this scepticism, my dear brethren, be indeed involuntary, when he refuses to admit the doctrines of a book, which, by his own confession, cannot be the work of man ? when this book bears the marks of truth, so striking, so great, and so inimitable, that the inventor would be more astonishing than the hero of it ? Surely we may here safely say that iniquity hath belied itself.

It appears, my dear brethren, that this author hath rejected revelation, only to adopt natural religion. " What God requires us to do, says he, he doth not tell us from the mouths of others ; but inscribes it in the bottom of

our hearts." But hath not God written in our hearts the obligation of believing in him, when we are convinced that it is himself who hath spoken? Now what certitude have we not that the scriptures are the word of God? The actions of Socrates, of which no one hath the least doubt, are, by the confession of this author himself, not so well attested as those of Jesus Christ. Natural religion, therefore, itself, directs us to receive that which is revealed. But it is not certain that this author really admits of natural religion; at least he doth not acknowledge its necessity. No, my dear brethren, "If I am mistaken, says he, it is without design. This is sufficient to prevent my errors from being imputed to me as a crime. And though you should be mistaken in the same manner, it is of very little consequence." That is to say, it is sufficient according to this writer, to be persuaded you are in possession, of the truth, in order that such persuasion, though attended with the most monstrous errors, should not be a subject of reproach; and that every man, who professes himself to be sincere and ingenuous, should be accounted religious, and wise, tho' adopting even the horrid doctrines of atheism. Is not this, to throw open the door to all the modes of superstition, the fanatical systems, and chimerical notions of the human mind? Is not this a maxim that would countenance as many different religions and modes of worship as there are different people in the world? Alas! my dear brethren, be not deceived in this

this particular. Sincerity is no farther to be esteemed than as it is docile or enlightened. We are commanded to study our religion and to believe its doctrines in sincerity and truth. We have, for our warrant, the authority of the church; let us learn to know it, and to repose ourselves safely therein. We may then place confidence in our sincerity, and spend our lives in peaceful expectation of that moment, which shall open to us the light of eternity.

A further instance my dear brethren, of the flagrant insincerity of the unbeliever we are refuting, is the manner in which he supposes the catholic and the christian, to reason on matters of religion. What futile and ridiculous arguments doth he put into the mouths, both of the one and the other, in order to render them contemptible! He hath written an imaginary dialogue between a christian whom he supposes inspired, and an infidel whom he styles a rationalist. Hear what they are made to say. The former begins. "Your reason tells you that the whole is greater than a part; but I tell you, from God, that a part is greater than the whole." To which the latter replies. "And who are you that dare to tell me that God contradicts himself? In whom shall I rather believe? in him who instructs me, by means of reason, in the knowledge of eternal truths, or in you who would impose on me, in his name, the greatest absurdity?"

But with what assurance, my dear brethren, doth this writer impute such arguments to christians? The God of reason,

we affirm, to be the God of revelation also. Reason and revelation are the two organs, by which he hath been pleased to make himself known to mankind; either by way of teaching them the truth, or instructing them in the knowledge of his will. Should one of these organs contradict the other, it is certain that God would contradict himself. But can God be said to contradict himself, because he commands us to believe incomprehensible truths? You tell us, ye impious infidels, that the tenets, which we look upon to be revealed, contradict eternal truths; but it is not sufficient for you, merely to assert this: and could you have proved it, you would have done it long ago, and triumphed in the victory. The insincerity of the author of *Emilius*, is not less reprehensible in the language of his pretended catholic. "We catholics, says he, make a great noise about the authority of the church: but what do we gain by it, if it requires as many proofs to establish this authority as other sects require immediately to establish their doctrines? the church determines that the church has a right to determine. Is not this a special proof of its authority?" Who would not think, my dear brethren, from the pretences of this impostor, that the authority of the church is to be proved only by its own decisions, and that it proceeds arbitrarily thus, "I determine that I am infallible, therefore, I am infallible." A scandalous imputation, my dear brethren! The grounds of christianity, the spirit of the gospel, and even the errors and weakness of the human understanding, all serve to demonstrate

strate that the church, established by Jesus Christ, is an infallible church. We are assured that, as the divine legislator always instructed mankind in the ways of truth, the church of Christ will ever do the same. We prove the authority of the church therefore, not from that authority itself, but from that of Jesus Christ; a method of reasoning not less exact than what he reproaches us with, is senseless and ridiculous.

It is not only in our times, my dear brethren, that the spirit of irreligion hath been a spirit of independence and revolt. And, in fact, how is it to be expected that men, so daring as to refuse to submit to the authority of God himself, should respect that of kings, who are the representatives of God; or that of magistrates, who are the representatives of kings? "Mankind, says the author of *Emilius* to his pupil, is essentially made up of the common people; so that, were there not a king left upon the face of the earth, they would not be misled, and things would go on just as well without them. --- The many (says he a little farther) will be always sacrificed to the few, and public interest to that of particulars. The specious names of justice and moderation, will be made the instruments of violence and the weapons of iniquity. Hence it follows, (continues he) that those distinguished orders of men, which pretend to be useful to the rest, are in reality, at the expence of the rest, useful only to themselves: and hence may be determined in what consideration they ought to be held, according to the rules of right reason

and justice." Thus, my dear brethren, doth impiety presume to question the intentions of him *by whom kings reign* ; thus doth it take delight in corrupting the sources of public felicity, and in propagating those maxims which tend to confusion and anarchy, with all their dreadful consequences. But what doth religion teach us, in this case ? " Fear God, honour the king* . — Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers ; for there is no power but of God : the powers that be, are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God : and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation † . "

Yes, my dear brethren, in every thing relative to civil objects, you ought to be as obedient to your prince, and to those who are deputed to exercise his authority, as unto God himself. Your duty to that supreme Being alone should set bounds to your submission ; and if then you should be deemed culpable, and suffer for your obedience to his great commands, you should submit without murmur or complaint. Even Nero and Domitian themselves, who chose rather to be a scourge to the earth, than the fathers of their people, were accountable only to God for the abuse of that power he put into their hands.

" Christians (says St. *Augustine*) are obedient to their temporal lord, for the sake of their eternal one."

* 1 Peter c. ii. v. 17.

† Rom. c. xiii. v. 1. 2.

We have taken notice, my dear brethren, but of a few of the many impieties contained in this treatise of *Education*; a work equally meriting the anathemas of the church, and the severity of the laws: and what more can be necessary to inspire you with horror against it? Miserable would it be for you, and unhappy for society, if your children were educated in the principles of this author. As nothing but religion hath taught us to know the nature of man, his greatness, his misery, and future destiny, it belongs only to that religion to form the understanding of youth, to improve their manners, and to procure for them lasting happiness both in this life and that which is to come. We are not insensible, my dear brethren, how laborious and difficult a task is the work of a truly christian education; nor that a very considerable share of prudence and knowledge is necessary to discharge it. What an admirable mixture of good nature and resolution it requires! What prudence, to adapt ourselves to all conditions, ages, dispositions and characters, without departing from our duty! what zeal! what patience! to nourish in young and tender minds, the precious seeds of innocence and virtue; to root up, as far as possible, those vicious inclinations, which are the sad effects of our original depravity; and, in a word, to teach them, according to *St. Paul*, to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ." * We say

* Titus c. ii. v. 12.

therefore, unto all those, who are charged with so important and honourable a function as the education of youth : Plant ye and water, in the firm hope that, the Lord, assisting your endeavours, will give an increase. " Be instant in season and out of season, according to the directions of the same apostle, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine."

|| Above all, be careful to unite instruction with example: instruction without example is a disgrace to the instructor, and a subject for scandal to him who is instructed, Let the pious and charitable Tobit be your model; " carefully instruct your children, in doing the works of justice, in giving alms, in calling to mind the Lord, and in praising him at all times, in sincerity and with all their might;" and your posterity, like that of this holy patriarch will be loved of God and of man.

But at what time ought the education of children to commence? at the first dawn of intelligence: and this dawn is sometimes premature. " Train up a child in the way he should go, saith the wise man, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." * Such is in fact the ordinary course of human life: even in the midst of licentiousness and during the empire of the passions, the principles of a christian education afford a light which occasionally discovers to the sinner the horror of that abyss into which he is plunged; and displays the means of his

|| 2 Tim. c. iv. v. 1.

* Prov. c. xxii. v. 6.

escape. How many are there, I say again, who, after having spent their youth in vice and libertinism, are brought back by this light into the paths of virtue; and, pursuing, though late, the principles of religion and humanity, become an honour to themselves and to their country!

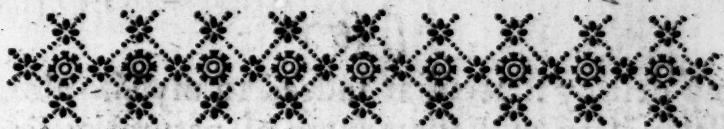
It remains, my dear brethren, that, in the close of this exhortation, I conjure you by the mercy of God, to attach yourselves inviolably to that holy religion in which you have had the happiness to be educated; to defend yourselves against the approach of an absurd philosophy, which hath nothing less in view than to rob you of the inheritance of Jesus Christ, to render his promises void, and to set him on the footing with the founders of those religions, whose frivolous or pernicious doctrines have proved their imposture. The christian faith is despised, rejected and insulted only by those who are ignorant of it, or on whose irregularities it is too great a restraint. But the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. The christian and catholic church, is the commencement of the eternal kingdom of Jesus Christ: Nothing is stronger, says St. *John Damascene*, than the church; it is a rock which the waves beat against in vain; it is a mountain which nothing can shake."

For the foregoing causes, respecting the new treatise on education, entitled *Emilius*, &c. by *J. J. Rousseau*, citizen of Geneva; after consulting with divers persons distinguished for their learning and piety, and calling upon the name of the Lord, we condemn the said book, as

containing abominable doctrines calculated to invalidate the principles of natural justice, and to subvert the foundations of the christian religion : as inculcating maxims contrary to the morality of the gospel ; tending to disturb the peace of society, and to excite subjects to revolt against the authority of their lawful sovereigns : as containing a great number of propositions respectively false, scandalous, full of rancour against the church and its ministers, derogatory from the respect due to the holy scriptures and the traditions of the church, erroneous, impious, blasphemous and heretical. We, therefore, expressly forbid the inhabitants of our diocese, to read or keep the said book, under the severest penalty of the law. We also direct that this our mandate be read in all the parochial churches of the city, suburbs and diocese of *Paris*; and also to be published and affixed wherever it may be judged needful. Given at our Archiepiscopal palace in *Paris*. Aug. 20. 1762.

Signed Christopher Archbishop of *Paris*;

By M. de la Touche.



A N

Expostulatory Letter

F R O M

J. J. ROUSSEAU Citizen of *Geneva*,

T O

CHRISTOPHER DE BEAUMONT,

ARCHBISHOP of PARIS.

WHEREFORE, my Lord, should there be any altercation between you and me? what language can we speak, or how shall we understand each other; when there is hardly any thing in common between us?

I am compelled, nevertheless, to make you a reply; you yourself have compelled me to it. Had you only attacked my book, your censures might have passed unanswered; but you have attacked my personal character; and by so much the greater sanction your authority bears in the eye of the public, the less it becomes me to be silent, when I am the object of your defamation.

But before I proceed to my defence I cannot forbear reflecting a little on the peculiarity of

my destiny : peculiar indeed to myself alone. I was born with some share of natural genius ! the public have authorised me to make this boast. I spent my youth, nevertheless, in a happy obscurity, out of which I never attempted to emerge. Had I made such an attempt, indeed, it would have been as great a peculiarity, that, during the vivacity of youth, I should not have succeeded, as that I should succeed but too well in the sequel, when that vivacity began to decay. In this obscurity, my lord, instead of a fortune I always despised, and a name I have since bought too dear, I possessed the only blessings my heart was desirous of, those of tranquillity and friendship. Thus, easy in mind, and happy in my friends, I drew near my fortieth year, when, unluckily, an academical question engaged my attention, and drew me into a profession, for which nature never intended me. The unexpected success of my first essay proved seductive. A numerous party of opponents started up against me, and, without understanding my arguments, answered them with a petulance that piqued me, and a degree of vanity that perhaps excited mine. I stood up, of course, in my own defence, and, being urged from one dispute to one another, found myself engaged in a career of controversy almost before I was aware. Thus I became an author at a time of life when authors usually throw up their profession, and a man of letters even from my contempt for that character. From this time I have been a writer of some
little

little consequence with the publick : but from this time alas ! my friends and my repose have left me. My labour was all I got for my pains ; and a little reputation was to make up for every thing else. If this be an indemnification to those who are ever absent from themselves, it never was any to me.

Had I placed even for a moment any hopes on so frivolous a gratification I should have been soon undeceived. In what a fluctuation hath the public opinion constantly been, with regard to my abilities and character ! Being at a distance, I was judged of only by interest or caprice, and for hardly two days together was ever I looked upon in the same light. Sometimes I was a dark and gloomy being, at others an angel of light. I have seen myself within the space of one year, applauded, courted, entertained, and requested even at court, and again speedily after insulted, threatened, hated and condemned. Over night assassins laid in wait for me in the streets ; and in the morning I was threatened with a *lettre-de-cachet*. The good and the evil came from almost the same source ; and both of them were the effect of a mere song.

I have written, it is true, on several subjects, but always on the same principles ; I had always the same system of morals, the same faith, the same maxims, and if you will, the same opinions. Very different, however, have been the opinions that have been passed on my books or rather on the author of my books ; because I have been judged rather from the subjects I treated of, than from my sentiments

on those subjects. After the publication of my first discourse*, I was said to be a writer fond of paradoxes, who amused himself in proving things he did not believe. After my letter on the French music, I was called a professed enemy to that nation, and was very near being treated as a conspirator and traitor: one would have thought, by the zeal shewn on that occasion, that the fate of the French monarchy depended on the reputation of their opera. After my discourse on the inequality of mankind, I was deemed an atheist, and misanthrope: After my letter to Mr. d'Alembert, on the theatres, I was celebrated as the defender of christian morals: after Eloisa, I was supposed to be passionate and tender; at present I am a monster of impiety, and shall probably by and by be a miracle of devotion.

Thus fluctuating is the public opinion concerning me; those who adopt it being as ignorant why they detest me now, as why they once respected me. As to myself, however, I have always remained the same; more zealous, perhaps, than enlightened in my researches, but sincere in all, even against myself; simple and well-meaning, but sensible and weak; often doing wrong, yet always respecting what was right; connected by friendship, never by circumstances, and ever more strongly influenced by sentiment than interest;

* In answer to the question, whether he cultivation of the arts and sciences had contributed to the purity of manners.

requiring nothing from others; unwilling to render myself dependent on any; submitting to their prejudices as little as to their will, and preserving my own as free as my reason; fearing God without being afraid of the devil; reasoning on matters of religion without licentiousness, approving neither impiety nor fanaticism, but hating persecutors still worse than infidels; without disguising my sentiments from any one, without affectation, without artifice, without deceit; telling my faults to my friends, my sentiments to all the world, and to the public those truths which concern it, without flattery and without pride, equally careless whether I should please or offend it. Such are my crimes, and such are my merits.

At length totally disgusted with that intoxicating vapour of reputation, which inflates without satisfying; wearied with the importunities of indolent visitors, who, overburthened with their own time, were prodigal of mine; and sighing after the necessary repose my heart is so fond of, I had joyfully laid down my pen. Satisfied with the reflection that I had never taken it up but for the good of my fellow creatures, I required only, as the reward of my zeal, that I might be permitted to live unmolested in my retreat, and to die in peace. In this, however, I was mistaken; the officers were sent to apprehend me, and just at the moment that I flattered myself the troubles of my life were at end, my greatest misfortunes began. There is something very particular in all this; yet this is nothing.

A citizen of Geneva gets a book printed in Holland, and by an arret of the parliament of Paris, this book is burnt by the common hangman, without any respect shewn to the sovereign, whose privilege it had obtained. A protestant proposes, in a protestant country, certain objections against the church of Rome, and he is condemned by the parliament of Paris. A republican makes objections, in a republican state, against monarchy, and he is condemned by the parliament of Paris. The parliament of Paris must surely have strange notions of their jurisdiction, to suppose it extends over the whole human race.

The same parliament, ever so remarkably circumspect in their proceedings when individuals of their own nation are concerned, break through all order, in passing sentence on a poor foreigner. Without knowing whether he was really the author of the book imputed to him, whether he acknowledged it, or caused it to be printed; without any regard to the unhappiness of his situation, or pity for his bodily infirmities, they began their process, by ordering him to be clapped up in prison. Thus they would have had him taken out of his bed, and dragged from his house, to be thrown among infamous criminals, to rot in a jail. Nay, who knows but they might have burnt him at the stake, without suffering him to speak in his defence! for what reason is there to think they would have proceeded more regularly afterwards than at first, in a prosecution so violently commenced, as to be almost

almost without example, even in the countries of the inquisition? Thus it is, in my case alone, that this sagacious tribunal forgets its prudential maxims; it is against me only, that a people, who boast so much of their humanity, and by whom I thought myself beloved, act with the strangest barbarity: it is thus, the country I preferred as an asylum above all others, justifies my giving it that preference! I know not how far such proceedings may be consistent with the laws of nations; but I know very well that where they are carried on, a man's liberty, and, perhaps, his life, lies at the mercy of the first printer who chuses to set his name to a book.

A citizen of Geneva owes no respect to such unjust magistrates, who order persons to be apprehended and committed to prison, on the first scandalous information given them, without citing the accused to appear and answer for himself. Now, not having been cited to appear, he is not obliged to do it. But, being thus attacked by force and violence, he is justified in flying from persecution. He shakes the dust off his feet, therefore, and leaves an inhospitable country, where the strong are so ready to oppress the weak, and to load the stranger with chains, without hearing his defence; without knowing whether the act he is accused of, be criminal, or being so, whether he hath indeed committed it. He abandons with regret the pleasing solitude he had chosen, leaving all his possessions, his few, but valuable friends, behind. Weak and infirm

as he is, he is obliged to undergo the fatigues of a long journey; hoping at the end of it to breathe freely in a land of liberty. He approaches his own country, flattering himself his reception there will console him for his past disgrace—But what am I going to say? My heart sinks, my hand trembles, and my pen falls to the ground: I will be silent, nor be guilty of exposing my country.

And wherefore am I thus treated? I do not ask, for what reason? but on what pretence? The magistrates have been rash enough to judge me guilty of impiety, without reflecting that the book, containing the pretended instances of it, is in every body's hands. What would they not give effectually to suppress that authentic testimony in my favour; that they might then be able more boldly to say it contains what they pretend to have found there! But this proof of my innocence will remain in spite of all their efforts to suppress it; and posterity will be amazed, in looking therein for the enormous crimes imputed to the author, to find only the errors and mistakes of a sincere friend to virtue.

I shall avoid speaking of my contemporaries, because I would be hurtful to none. But the atheist Spinoza was peaceably suffered to teach his doctrines to the world; he met with no opposition in printing or selling his works. He came to France and was well received there; all the states of Europe were ready to afford him countenance, or at least protection. He was offered professorships by some
princes

princes, and particularly honoured by others; living and dying peacefully, and even respected. And yet, in an age so much celebrated as the present, for philosophy, reason and humanity, a defender of the cause of truth is proscribed and pursued from state to state, from azylum to azylum, without the the least regard for his indigence, or pity for his infirmities; and all for having proposed, with great circumspection, and even with great respect and tenderness for mankind, some doubts founded on the honour of the supreme Being. For this he is hunted thro' the world, with a bitterness of persecution the vilest malefactor never experienced, and which would be even cruel to exert against a man possessed of health and strength to support him under it. Prohibited the use of the common elements of fire and water in almost every part of Europe, he is driven from his very retreat in the woods; and is only safe in the fortitude of an illustrious protector, and the goodness of an enlightened prince; all which became necessary to ensure him an azylum in the midst of the mountains. Instead of safety thus procured, he had, in all probability, spent the remainder of his miserable life in chains, or perished beneath the torture, had he been found, during the first phrenzy which seized on governments, at the mercy of his inhuman persecutors.

Escaped from the hangman, he fell next into the hands of the priests: not that I shall mention any ill treatment, as surprising, he might

might meet with from them : but surely it is something wonderful, that a man of virtue, whose mind is as noble as his birth, an illustrious archbishop, who ought to suppress their baseness, should authorize it ! Yet so it is ; this catholic prelate issues out a mandate against a protestant author ; he mounts his tribunal to examine into the particular doctrines of an heretic ; and altho' he condemns indiscriminately every one that is not of his church, yet he refuses to permit the accused to err his own way, but prescribes in a manner the path in which he must descend to hell. No sooner have the inferior clergy received his sanction, but they fly with virulence on the enemy whom they imagine to be levelled with the ground, and to lie at their mercy. There is not the meanest vicar or ignorant curate of a country parish, who doth not take a pride in insulting the devoted author, whom the senate and their bishop have united to crush ?

Thus, my lord, have I displayed the unhappy circumstances peculiar to my situation, of which there is no precedent. Nor is this all. — The present is perhaps one of the most difficult passages of my life ; one of those in which revenge and self-love are the most easily satisfied, and least permit a man of integrity to be moderate. Ten lines more, and I cover my persecutors with eternal ridicule. Oh ! that the public did but know two anecdotes without my being at the trouble of telling them ! Oh ! that they did but know who were the persons

persons that meditated my ruin, and what steps they have taken to effect it! They would see by what contemptible insects, by what dark means the powers of government are sometimes moved: they would see by what foul leaven the parliament was put into a ferment. They would see from what ridiculous cause, the several states of Europe united in league together against the son of a watch-maker! How greatly should I enjoy their surprise, were I not myself so nearly concerned in it.

Hitherto my pen, though bold in relating the truth, hath always kept itself free from satire; it hath always respected the character of others in defending my own. Shall I now, therefore, when I am going to lay it aside, dip it into calumny, or copy the stile of my enemies? No; be theirs all the advantage of stabbing men in the dark. For my part, I would only defend myself openly, and would do nothing more than act in my own defence. To this end, what the public already know, is sufficient; or at least what they may know without my giving any one offence.

A surprizing thing of this kind, and what I may safely say, is to see the intrepid Christopher de Beaumont, whom no power could reduce to make peace with the Jansenists, become without knowing it, the dupe to their animosity: to see their most irreconcilable enemy raging against me, because I would not be of their party; because I would not write against the jesuits, whom I do not love, though I have no cause of complaint against them, and think
them

them ill-treated. If your lordship pleases to cast your eye over the sixth volume of the New Eloisa, you will there discover, in a note, page 138, the true source of my misfortunes. I have prophesied in that note (for I intermeddle also sometimes with prophesying) that as soon as the Jansenists should gain the superiority, they would be more persecuting and severe than their enemies. I did not then know, however, that my prediction would be verified on myself. The thread of this clue would not be difficult for those to unravel who know how my book hath been treated. I cannot say more on this head without saying too much; but I may at least inform you, what sort of people you have been influenced by, without suspecting it.

Will it be believed that you would have attacked my book had it not been first censured by the parliament? Some people may believe it, or at least say it; but you, whose conscience will not permit of deceit, will not say so. My discourse on the inequality of mankind, was generally read throughout your diocese, and yet you published no mandate against it. My letter to Mr. d'Alembert was as general, and yet you published no mandate against it. The new Eloisa was universal, and yet your lordship issued no mandate. All these books, however, which you must have read, since you judge of them, contain the same maxims, and display, without disguise, the same modes of thinking.

If the subject of them did not admit of their being so fully explained, they gained in force what they lost in extent, and express the author's profession of faith with less reserve than that of the Savoyard curate. Wherefore, my lord, did you not exert yourself on these occasions? Was your flock then less dear to you? did they read my books less? did they dislike my writings more? were they less exposed to error? No. — But the Jesuits were not then laid under proscription. I had not then fallen into the snares my enemies have since laid for me. That fatal note was not then known; and when it was known, the public had already passed their judgment of approbation on the book. It was too late to think of raising their resentment on that score for the present; it was thought proper to defer it to a more convenient opportunity. The occasion was attentively watched for, and eagerly seized, with all that fury which is common to partial zealots; nothing now was talked of but imprisonment and tortures. My book was said to be the signal for anarchy, and the trumpet of atheism; the author was stigmatised as a monster of iniquity, and it was thought amazing that he had been so long permitted to live.

Amidst this universal clamour, your lordship would have been ashamed to be silent; you chose therefore rather to commit an act of cruelty than to be accused of wanting zeal. You chose rather to serve your enemies than
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to bear the insult of their reproaches. Such, my lord, you must own, was the true motive of your mandate ; and such are the facts whose concurrence may, in my opinion, be very justly denominated singular.

Justice, I know, hath long given place to the maxims and formalities of state. I am not insensible that in some circumstances, a man, invested with a public character, is unhappily compelled, against his will, to act against honest men. To be moderate among zealots, is to expose oneself to their fury ; and I can easily conceive, that, in such a combination as that to which I have fallen a victim, it is necessary to join the cry and hunt with the wolves, or run the risque of being devoured by them. I do not complain therefore that your lordship has issued a mandate against my book ; but I complain that you have done it against myself, and that with as little candour as truth. I complain that, authorizing by your own language that which you reproach me for having put into the mouth of a dogmatist, you load me with calumnies which, without hurting my cause, attack my honour, or rather yours. I complain that you have wantonly, without reason, without necessity, and without regard to my misfortunes, abused me in a manner the most unworthy your own character. And after all, my lord, what is it I have done ? I, who have always spoken of you with so much esteem ; I, who have so often admired your unshaken fortitude ; tho' lamenting, it is true, the use which your prejudices

judices induced you to make of it ; I, who have always respected, and still respect, your virtues, even though you have so grossly injured me.

But thus it is, that people extricate themselves from difficulties, when they are determined to find fault, and are themselves in the wrong. As you could not answer my objections, you have imputed them to me as crimes ; you imagined you should make me despicable, by ill-treating me ; but you have been mistaken. On the contrary, without invalidating my arguments, you have made every humane and generous mind take part in my sufferings ; you have given occasion for every person of sense to reflect, that a man who judged so ill of the author, was still less qualified to judge well of his book.

You have shewn yourself, my lord, neither humane nor generous ; and yet you might have been so, without omitting any of the arguments you have made use of against my book : nay, I will take upon me to say, they would in that case have had much more weight. I must acknowledge, also, that I have no right to require those virtues of you, nor to expect any thing like them from an ecclesiastic. We shall enquire however, if you have, at least, been equitable and just ; for this is a duty imposed on all mankind, nor are the saints themselves excused in the breach of it.

Your lordship's mandate hath two points in view ; the one is to censure my book, and the

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other

other to abuse my person. I shall think I have made a sufficient reply to it ; therefore, if I prove that wherever you have endeavoured to refute me, you have reasoned falsely, and that where you have insulted me, you have been guilty of calumny. But when we prove our assertions as we go on, and are compelled by the importance of the subject, and the quality of our adversary, to proceed sedately, and to follow him step by step through all his censures, every word almost requires a page ; thus while a short satire is amusing to the reader, a long defence becomes irksome and tedious. Notwithstanding this inconvenience, however, I must make a defence, or sit down contented under your falsest imputations. I am resolved, therefore, to defend myself, but shall rather defend my honour than my book. It is not the creed of the Savoyard curate that I examine, but the mandate of the archbishop of Paris ; the scandal thrown on the editor only obliging him to speak of the work itself. I will endeavour to do myself justice, because it is my duty ; I owe it to my own character. At the same time, however, I am very sensible how disagreeable a circumstance it is, to contend with such a powerful adversary, and that the mere justification of the innocent can afford but a very dull entertainment to the reader.

The fundamental principle of all morality, that on which I have reasoned in all my writings, and which I explained in the last, with all the perspicuity I was master of, is this ;
that

that man is naturally good ; that he loves justice and order ; that there is no original perversity in the human heart, and that the first emotions of nature are always right. I have shewn that the only passion which is born with man, to wit, self-love, is in itself indifferent either to good or evil ; that it becomes good or evil only by accident, and according to the circumstances in which it is displayed. I have shewn that none of the vices imputed to the human heart are natural to it ; I have described the manner in which they arise, have traced as it were, their genealogy, and shewn the manner, in which, by a successive deviation from their original goodness, mankind are become what they are.

I have explained farther what I understand by this original goodness, which does not seem to flow from that indifference to good and evil, which is natural to self-love. Man is not a simple, but a compound being, formed of two substances. It is true, that all the world do not agree in this ; but you and I, my lord, are agreed in it, and I have endeavoured to demonstrate it to others. This being admitted then, self-love is not a simple passion ; but hath two principles, *viz.* the intelligent being and the sensitive being, whose happiness is not one and the same. The sensual appetites tend to the gratification of the body, and the love of order to that of the mind. This last passion, expanded and become active, is denominated conscience ; but conscience displays itself, and acts only from

knowledge. It is by acquiring knowledge only that man acquires a sense of order ; and it is from his acquiring this sense, that his conscience induces him to love it. Conscience is, therefore, nothing in those men, who have never compared different objects, and seen their relations. In such a state as this, a man knows nothing but himself ; he doth not see his own happiness to be consistent with, or opposed to, that of others : he neither loves nor hates ; but, confined solely to physical instinct, is a mere sensitive being, an idiot. This I have shewn at large in my discourse on the Inequality of mankind.

When, by a developement of the passions, the progress of which I have traced out, men begin to look about, on their fellow-creatures, they begin also to see the relation they stand in to one another, and to the objects about them ; hence arise their ideas of agreement or disagreement, of justice, of order, and the like. It is now that moral beauty becomes perceptible, and with conscience begins to act. They now possess virtues, and if they have vices also, it is because their separate interests increase, and their ambition is excited, in proportion as their knowledge grows extensive. So long also as the opposition of their interests, is less than the concurrence of their knowledge, men are essentially good. Such is the second state of mankind.

But when all the particular interests of individuals interfere, and clash against each other, when self-love is converted by its fermentation

mentation into self-interest, and opinion, by rendering the whole universe necessary to each individual, makes them all enemies, from their birth, and causes the happiness of one to depend on the misery of another; then conscience, too feeble to withstand the violence of the passions, is silenced by their impetuosity, and remains a mere empty word, which mankind reciprocally make use of to deceive each other. Then every one pretends to sacrifice his own interest to that of his country, and all are liars. Not one is desirous of the public good, unless it coincides with his own; and hence this co-incidence between the public and private good, becomes the object of that true policy, which alone is calculated to make men virtuous and happy. But I am now beginning to talk a strange language, as little understood by the majority of readers as by your lordship. This is the third and last state, beyond which nothing remains to be done; and thus we see how, man being naturally and originally good, individuals become wicked. The great object of my book is the means of preventing this defection. Not that I affirmed it, in the present order of things, to be absolutely possible; but this I affirmed, and do still, that there are no other means of effecting it, but those I have pointed out.

Your lordship is, nevertheless, pleased to say, my plan of education is so far from being consistent with christianity, that it is not adapted either to form citizens or men: your only proof of this assertion, however, is the doc-

trine of original sin. Now baptism, my lord, is the only means of deliverance from original sin and its effects. Whence it follows, according to your argument, that there never were any citizens, or men in the world, but Christians. You must either deny this consequence, therefore, or own that you have proved too much.

As you go so far back for your proofs, I must do the same for my objections to them. And first it appears to me, that this doctrine of original sin, subject as it is to the most striking difficulties, is not to be found in the scriptures, so clearly or so strictly expressed as the rhetorical Augustine, and other theologues have been pleased to maintain. It is farther hardly possible to conceive, that God should create so many innocent souls, with a view to join them to corrupt bodies, there to contract a moral impurity, for which he should damn them to all eternity in hell, though guilty of no other crime than what was the immediate effect of that union, which was his own work. I shall not say, whether, (as you have boasted) by this system, you have cleared up the mystery of the human heart; but I affirm that you have greatly obscured by it, the justice and goodness of the supreme Being. If you have removed one objection, it hath been only to substitute others much greater in its place.

But after all, what hath this doctrine to do with the author of Emilius? It is certain that, notwithstanding he conceived his book might be of use to mankind in general, he wrote

wrote it more particularly for christians ; for the use of men, cleansed from the guilt of original sin and its effects, at least with regard to their souls, by the sacrament instituted for that purpose. According to that doctrine, we all recovered our primitive innocence in our infancy, being rendered by baptism as pure of heart as Adam came out of the hands of God. Will you say, that we have contracted new impurities ? How ? as we began the world, with being thus cleansed, in what manner can we have contracted them since ? Is not the blood of Christ sufficiently efficacious to wash away the stain ? or is our guilt the effect of the natural corruption of the flesh ; and hath God made us originally corrupt, independent of original sin, on purpose to have the pleasure of punishing us ? You attribute to original sin the vices of those, whom you affirm to be cleansed from it ; and yet blame me for having attributed their vices to another cause. Is it just to make it criminal in me not to reason so bad as your lordship ?

It may be said, indeed, that the effects which I attribute to baptism *, do not appear by any

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external

* Burnet supposes that the corruption and mortality of the human race, in consequence of the fall of Adam, were the natural effect of the forbidden fruit ; that aliment containing some poisonous juices, which proved destructive to the animal œconomy, by irritating the passions weakening the understanding, and diffusing principles of vice and mortality throughout the whole
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external signs ; that christians are not less prone to vice than infidels ; whereas, according to my supposition, the native virulence of sin should appear in the latter, and make an evident distinction between them. With the assistance, it might be said, of gospel morality, added to baptism, all christians ought to resemble angels ; while infidels, being not only uncleansed from original sin, but also given up to false worship, would be little better than devils. I can imagine, that, if this difficulty were artfully insisted on, it would prove very embarrassing : for what answer can we make to those who are ready to demonstrate, that the effects of a redemption, purchased at so high a price, are, with regard to the moral virtues of mankind, next kin to nothing. But, setting aside my suspicion, that no expedient, agreeable to sound theology, can be found to get over this difficulty, were I to admit that baptism does not effectually remedy the corruption of our nature, your lordship will not be found to have reasoned a jot better. We are sinners, you say, because of the sins of our first parents ; but how came our first parents
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man. In this case, however, the nature of the remedy being adapted to that of the disease, it is plain that baptism ought to have a physical operation on the body of man, by restoring him the constitution he enjoyed in a state of innocence, and, if not the immortality dependent on it, at least, all the moral effects of such a re-establishment of the animal œconomy.

to be sinners themselves ? Why is not the same reason, by which you would explain his sin, applicable to his posterity, without imputing to them his guilt ? and why must we impute injustice to God, in that we are made sinners, and subjected to punishment from the vice of our birth, when our first parents were sinners, and were punished in like manner, without it ? Original sin may serve to explain every thing but its own principle, and this is the very thing to be explained.

You advance that, according to my principle, we lose sight of that ray of light which discovers to us the mystery of our own hearts ; and at the same time do not see that my principle, more universal than yours, explains even the sin of the first man Adam †, which yours leaves in obscurity. You behold man only as being in the hands of the devil, and I explain the manner

† To demur against an useless and arbitrary prohibition, is nothing but what is natural ; but it is so far from being vicious in itself, that it is conformable to the order of things, and the constitution of human nature : for man would not be in a state to provide for his own preservation, if he had not a very lively sense of self-love, and of all those rights and privileges he hath received from nature. An omnipotent being would require nothing but what is useful ; but a feeble being, whose power is farther limited and restrained by law, loses part of himself by such restraint, and is urged doubtless to reclaim what he is thus de-

manner of his fall. The cause of evil is, according to you, the corruption of our nature ;

prived of. To impute this to him as a crime, is to make it criminal in him, to be himself, and not another person ; it is to require him to be, and not to be, at the same time. For this reason, the command which was broken by Adam, appears to me to have been rather a paternal advice, than an absolute prohibition ; a kind of friendly warning to him, to abstain from a pernicious and deadly fruit. This idea is surely more conformable to our notions of the goodness of the deity, and even to the text, than that which Divines have been pleased to teach us ; for, with regard to the twofold death, it hath been shewn, that the phrase *morte morieris* is not so emphatical as they pretend ; being only an hebraism, made use of in other parts of scripture, where such emphasis could not take place. There is, besides, so natural a motive for indulgence and commiseration in the subtilty of the serpent, and the seduction of the woman, that, all circumstances considered, the crime of Adam appears really but a venial sin. And yet, according to our divines, what a shocking punishment attends it ! it is impossible to conceive any thing more terrible ! for what greater punishment could Adam have been subjected to, even for the greatest of crimes, than that of being condemned, together with his posterity, to death in this world, and to suffer to all eternity, amidst the flames of hell, in the next ? Can such a punishment be inflicted by the God of mercy on a poor unhappy being, merely for suffering himself to be deceived ? how do I abominate this
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ture ; and this very corruption is the evil of which I would discover the cause. We both are agreed, I imagine, that man was created originally good ; but you say he is wicked because he is wicked ; and I endeavour to shew how he became so. Which of us, do you think approaches nearest to first principles ?

And yet you proceed in a triumphant manner, as if you had levelled my argument with the ground. You oppose against me, as an immoveable obstacle, “ that striking mixture of greatness and meanness, of zeal for truth, and love for error, of inclination to virtue, and tendency to vice,” which is to be found in man. “ Astonishing contrast ! say you, which disconcerts the pagan philosophy, and leaves it to wander in vain speculation !”

The theory of man, however, is not a vain speculation, as it is founded in nature, and proceeds only on the support of well-connected facts, which, leading us to the sources of the passions, teach us how to regulate their course. If you are pleased to call the Savoyard’s creed heathen philosophy, I can make no reply to such an imputation, because I cannot comprehend your meaning * ; but I think

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discouraging doctrine of our cruel theologues ! I should think myself a blasphemer, indeed, if I were tempted but for a moment to believe it.

* Unless, indeed, it relates to what his lordship charges me with in the sequel, of admitting a plurality of Gods.

it ludicrous enough that you should borrow his own terms to tell us he hath not explained, what he hath explained so clearly.

Your lordship will permit me to remind you of the conclusion you have drawn from an objection so well discussed, with all the chain of consequences attending it. "Man finds himself impelled by an unhappy tendency to vice, and how shall he make head against it, if he be not, in his infancy, put under the direction of preceptors, abounding in virtue, diligence and wisdom; or if, during his whole life, he does not, under the protection, and with the grace of God, make continual and powerful efforts to withstand it." That is, as much as to say, we see that mankind are wicked, notwithstanding they are kept under the most tyrannical subjection, from their infancy; if, therefore, they are not kept under such early subjection, how shall they ever become virtuous and prudent, since by constantly tyrannizing over them, it is impossible to make them so?

The force of our arguments concerning education, would become more sensible, if we apply them to a different subject. Let us, therefore, suppose, my lord, a man should address himself to us in the following manner. "You give yourselves a great deal of trouble to make choice of the most equitable governments, and to procure good laws. But I will demonstrate to you, in the first place, that your forms of governments themselves occasion those evils for which you think them

a remedy. I will prove to you farther, that it is impossible you should ever have either good laws, or equitable governments; and lastly I will point out to you the true way to prevent all the evils you complain of, without government, and without laws."

Let us suppose that after this, he should lay down his system, and point out his pretended means. I do not enquire whether his system be reasonable, or his means practicable. If they were not, it is possible he would only be looked upon as a lunatic, and be very justly confined to a dark chamber. But if unhappily his system should be well-founded and practicable, it would go much worse with him, and you will readily conceive, my lord, or others will do it for you, that it would be difficult to find racks and tortures enough to punish the detestable wretch for being in the right. But this is not strictly the present case; and whatever might befall the person of such a victim, it is certain an inundation of writings would burst out against his book. There would not be a single scribbler on the town, or under-graduate of the college, but, in order to pay his court to those in power, and proud of a *cum privilegio* to his writings, would load him with a pamphlet of abuse, and boast of having silenced the man, who might either be prevented speaking or might hold such antagonists in too much contempt to answer them. But this case also is not exactly to the present point. We will suppose then lastly, that some grave personage, interested in the
 affair,

affair, should think himself obliged to follow the example of others, and amidst other declamatory abuses, should address the culprit as follows. "What dost thou mean, abandoned wretch? wouldst thou overturn all government and law? when these are our only check on vice, and even these can hardly restrain it in moderate bounds? good God! what would become of us, if we had neither laws nor government? take away our prisons and our gibbets, and thefts and robberies would become universal: O, thou art an abominable wretch."

If, after so harsh a reproof, the poor man might venture to speak, he would doubtless express himself thus. "Excuse me, my noble lord, your honour is guilty of a *petitio principii*. I did not say that vice ought not to be suppressed: but I say it would be better to prevent its existence. I would provide against the insufficiency of the laws, and you object to me that very insufficiency. You accuse me of introducing abuses, because, instead of remedying, I chuse rather to prevent them.—What! if there were a method by which we might live always in health, must it be suppressed because the physicians would have nothing to do? your honour is desirous of seeing racks and gibbets; and I of seeing no malefactors to require them: with all due submission, therefore, I do not think myself that abominable wretch, your honour; pronounces me."

But

But to return to your lordship's mandate. "Alas! my dear brethren, in spite of the principles of the most salutary and virtuous education; and notwithstanding the most encouraging promises, and the most terrible menaces, of religion, the errors of youth are still too frequent." But I have proved that the education which you call the most salutary, is the most absurd and senseless; that the education you call the most virtuous, is in fact the cause of all the vices of children: I have proved that all the celestial glories of paradise have less influence over them than a lump of sugarcandy, and that they are much more afraid of being tired at vespers, than of burning in hell: I have proved that all the errors and extravagancies of youth, which you complain cannot be prevented by your means, are really effected by them. "Into what errors and excesses doth not youth when let alone, precipitate itself!" Youth, my lord, when let alone, never goes astray; all its errors arise from being misled. The companions and mistresses of young men, only compleat what their priests and preceptors begun. This, my lord, I have proved. But your lordship proceeds. "It is a torrent that rushes forth, in spite of the most powerful dykes that can be raised to oppose it: what then would be the consequence, if no obstacle was made use of to withstand its efforts?" In answer to this I might say, "It is a torrent which breaks down your feeble dykes and carries all before it. Enlarge its bed, and let it flow without obstacle

obstacle, and it will do no harm." But I am ashamed of employing on so serious a subject such florid declamation as each party makes use of at pleasure, and which proves nothing on either side.

It appears, however, that, notwithstanding the extravagances of youth are too numerous and frequent, on account of original sin, your lordship is not at so great variance with them on the whole; as you seem to be so well satisfied with that salutary and virtuous method of education, which is practised by your preceptors so full of virtue, diligence and wisdom; so that you think youth would be still great losers were they educated in any other manner, and it seems that you do not in fact think quite so ill of the present age, *the sink of all ages*, as you affect to speak in your mandate.

I confess, indeed, is quite superfluous for those people to project new schemes of education, who are well satisfied with the present; but if this be the case with your lordship, you must agree with me that you are not very nice or difficult in this matter. Had you been so easy with regard to doctrines, your diocese had not experienced the troubles with which it hath been long agitated; the storm you raised would not have fallen on the jesuits; I should not have been oppressed for the sake of company; and you would have enjoyed a greater share of tranquillity as well as myself.

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You confess that, to reform the world, as far as the weakness and, according to you, the corruption of our nature will permit, it is sufficient to observe, under the direction and influence of grace, the dawnings of human reason, and to direct them carefully to the path of truth. "By such means, say you, those minds, which are as yet exempt from prejudices, may be put always on their guard against error; those hearts which are as yet free from violent passions, may take the impression of every virtue." So far then we are agreed, for this I have said myself. It is true, I did not add that children should only be educated by priests; nor did I even think it necessary in order to form them citizens or men; but this error, if it be one, is so common among catholicks, that it surely should not be thought so very great a crime in a protestant. I do not enquire whether, in your country, the priests themselves are accounted very good citizens; but as it has been your business to educate the present generation, it lies between you, on one part, and your former mandates on the other, to decide whether their pupils have profited so much by the spiritual milk of the word, as to become such good saints, such sincere worshippers of God, such great men, "as to be worthy of being the support and ornament of their country." I might add to this, another observation which ought to strike all good Frenchmen, and of course your lordship, as such: and this is, that of all the several kings that have reigned
over

over your nation, the very best of them is the only one who was not educated by priests.

But of what consequence is this, since I do not exclude them from that task? let them educate youth if they are capable of it; I pretend not to oppose it; so that what you have said on that head, doth not in the least affect my book. Will you assert this, my plan is a bad one, merely because it is better adapted to other people than it is to those of the church.

If man is naturally good, as I think I have sufficiently demonstrated; it follows that he will remain such unless some foreign cause corrupts him; and if men be originally wicked, (which great pains have been taken to make me believe) it still follows that the wickedness comes from some foreign cause. Close up, therefore, all the avenues of vice, and the human heart will be always good.

On this principle I lay down the negative plan of education as the best, or rather as the only one that is good for any thing. I prove that all positive education acts contrary to the end designed, and shew in what manner the point aimed at, may be attained.

I call positive education that which tends to form the understanding before the proper time, and to give a child prematurely the knowledge of the duties of a man. I call that negative education, which tends to perfect the corporeal organs, the instrument of our knowledge, and which prepares us for reasoning by exercising

cising our senses. Do what we will, however, negative education is not inactive. It is true, it does not inculcate virtue, but it prevents the introduction of vice : it doth not teach us the truth, but it preserves us from error. It disposes a child towards every thing that may lead to truth, when he is in a capacity to comprehend it ; and to good, when he is in a capacity to love and admire it.

This fact displeases and offends you ; it is easy to see the reason of it. You begin by calumniating the design of the proposer. According to you, this inactivity of the mind appeared to me necessary, in order to dispose it to receive the errors I wanted to inculcate. It is not, however, very easy to conceive what error a tutor can want to inculcate, who teaches his pupil nothing so carefully, as to be sensible of his own ignorance, and to know that he knows nothing. You agree that the understanding is progressive, and is formed by degrees. “ But doth it thence follow, say you, that a child at the age of ten years should not know the difference between good and evil, that he should confound wisdom with folly, gentleness with cruelty, and virtue with vice ? ” Doubtless all this will follow, if the judgment doth not sooner unfold itself. “ What ! ” you proceed, will he not perceive that it is good to obey his parents, and that it is evil to disobey them ? ” So far from it, my lord, that I maintain he will, on the contrary, perceive that, to leave his play to go to his book notwithstanding it may be done in obedience to
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his parents, is an evil, and that to disobey them, in possessing himself of some delicious forbidden fruit, is good. I must confess, indeed, he will perceive that it is an evil to be punished, and that it is good to be rewarded; and it is by the ballance of this contradictory good and evil, that infantine prudence is always regulated. This, I think, I have fully demonstrated in my two first volumes, and particularly in the dialogue between the preceptor and the child. But you, my lord, refute my two volumes in as many lines; thus, "To assert this, my dear brethren, is to calumniate human nature, in imputing to it a degree of stupidity which is foreign to it." It is certainly impossible to make use of a keener or more concise argument. But this ignorance, which you are pleased to call stupidity, is constantly found in every mind, lying under the restraint of imperfect organs, or under the want of due cultivation: this is an observation easily made, and may be confirmed by the whole world. To impute this ignorance, therefore, to human nature, is not to calumniate or revile it: it is you, my lord, who have done this, in imputing to it a malignity to which it is a stranger.

But you go on. "To think of instructing mankind only at a season when their growing passions are most prevalent, is to inculcate it in a manner which the author himself explodes."

Here is another sinister intention, which your lordship is so good as to impute to me, though,

though, I dare say, no other person would ever have found it in the book. I have shewn, in the first place, that a child educated after my method, would not be under the tyranny of the passions at the time you speak of: secondly, I have shewn in what manner the lessons of prudence may retard the developement of those very passions. It is the bad effects of your own mode of education that you impute to mine; while you object to me those faults which I teach you how to prevent. I have secured the heart of my pupil till he arrive at the age of manhood; and when I see the passions ready to break forth, I even then take measures to retard their progress. Prudential instructions are of no use to a child, when very young, as he can neither interest himself in them, nor understand them. They are also useless, when he is grown up, and his heart is already agitated by the passions. It is at the period only which I have pointed out, that they can be really useful; for then whether it be to instruct or to divert the attention of youth, it is equally necessary that such attention should be engaged.

You say, “ in order that youth should possess the requisite docility to receive our instructions, I would have them be destitute of every principle of religion. The reason, my lord, is plain; I would have them be of some religion, and am therefore against teaching them any thing; the truth of which they are not capacitated to understand. But, had I said, my lord, that, “ in order to find youth possessed

possessed of the requisite docility to receive our instructions, we must be careful to begin with them before they come to years of understanding;" should I have reasoned worse than your lordship? And can this be any prepossession in favour of the instructions you give to children? According to you I made choice of the age of reason to inculcate error; and you anticipate that age, to inculcate truth. You are solicitous, and in haste, to instruct a child, before he is capable of discerning right from wrong; while I am indifferent, and wait to deceive him, till he is capable of judging for himself. Is this a natural conclusion? Which, my lord, is most to be suspected of imposture, he who would address himself only to men, or he who would have to do solely with children?

You censure me, for having affirmed and demonstrated, that, every child who believes in God, is necessarily an idolater, or anthropomorphite; and controvert that assertion, by affirming, that we can suppose neither one nor the other, of a child, that receives the education of a christian. This, my lord, is the matter in question; it remains to examine the proofs. Mine is, that no education, however truly christian, can confer a degree of understanding on a child which is above his years, or detach his ideas from material objects, from which even grown persons cannot detach theirs. I will appeal farther, to experience; advising my readers to consult their own memory, and to recollect whether, in believing a God, during their infancy, they did

did not always attach some corporeal image to their idea of the Deity. When you tell a child "that the Deity is like nothing which comes under the cognizance of our senses," his mind is either so perplexed as to understand nothing, or he understands that the Deity is nothing. When you talk to him of *infinite intelligence*, he is ignorant what *intelligence* is; and still more so of what you mean by the term *infinite*. You may, indeed, make him repeat after you the words you dictate to him; you may, also, if it be required, make him say he understands them: for that concession costs him little, and he had much rather say, he comprehends you, than be chid or beaten for want of apprehension. The ancients, not even excepting the Jews, universally represented the Deity as a corporeal Being, and are there not many christians, particularly Roman catholics, who do the same at this day. If your children talk like men, it is because your men are still children: and this is the very reason why your inexplicable mysteries no longer puzzle any one; the terms of them being as easily got by rote as any other. It is, indeed, one of the great conveniences of modern christianity, to be satisfied with a certain jargon of words without ideas.

From an examination into that intelligence, which leads to the knowlege of God, I find it unreasonable to believe this knowlege "always necessary to salvation." As proof of this, I cite the case of idiots and children; with

with whom also I rank those persons who have not acquired sufficient knowledge to comprehend the existence of God. On this occasion you say, " We need not be surprized, however, my dear brethren, that this author defers so long the knowledge of the existence of a Deity, when he doth not believe it necessary to salvation." Thus you begin, by rendering my proposition more obnoxious, in charitably suppressing the word *always*; which not only softens, but, in fact, gives it a different sense; for, according to the manner in which I have expressed myself, it is admitted that this knowledge is usually necessary, and according to that you impute to me, it never is necessary. After this little piece of deceit, your lordship proceeds thus. " It is clear (says he, in the character of an imaginary personage) that a man may, under some circumstances, live to grow old, without believing in God, and yet he would not, for that reason, be deprived of his presence in the other world, if his unbelief were involuntary: and this I affirm to be sometimes the case."

Before I proceed to transcribe your remark on this passage, you will permit me to make mine; and this is, that the pretended personage you speak of here, is really myself, and not the curate: this passage, which you imagined to be in his creed, being in a different part of my work. You must read, my lord, very carelessly, and quote very inaccurately, those writings you nevertheless so severely condemn. A person in office, who takes upon
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him thus to censure others, ought surely to be a little more exact. I come now to your remark: "Observe, my dear brethren, the author doth not mean here a person who is incapable of the use of reason, but merely one whose reason might have received no assistance from information." After this you affirm the proposition to be absurd. "Saint Paul, you say, assures us indeed that, among the pagan philosophers, many had, by the force of reason alone, arrived at the knowledge of the true God;" and thereupon you quote the words of that apostle.

It is often, my lord, but a small fault, not to understand the author we read, but it is a great one not to understand him before we attempt to refute him, and still a much greater not to do it, before we take upon ourselves to abuse him. Now, you have not understood that passage of my book, which you have here attacked, any more than you have done many others. The reader will judge, however, whether this be my fault or yours, when I have quoted the passage itself throughout.

"We protestants hold, that no child, who dies before he arrives at the age of reason, is deprived of salvation: the Roman-catholics believe the same of every child that is baptized, though it should never once have heard the name of God. There are some cases, therefore, in which men may be saved without believing in God, as in infancy and imbecillity of mind, as in idiots and madmen, where the understanding is incapable of the operations

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requisite to infer an acknowledgment of the Deity. All the difference that I see here between me and my readers, is, that you think children of seven years of age capacitated to believe in God, and I do not think them capable of it even at fifteen. Whether I am right or wrong in this particular, it is not in itself an article of faith, but only a simple observation in natural history.

On the same principles it is evident, that if a man should arrive at old age without believing in God, he would not be deprived of his presence in the other world, provided his infidelity be not wilful ; and this I say may sometimes happen. You will admit that, with respect to madmen, a malady deprives them of their intellectual faculties, but not of their condition as men, nor of course their claim to the beneficence of their Creator. Why, then will you not admit the same claim, in those who, sequestered in their infancy from all society, have lived the real life of a savage, deprived of that information which is to be acquired only by conversation with mankind ? For it is a demonstrable impossibility, that such a savage should ever raise his ideas to the knowledge of the true God. Reason tells us, that man is punishable only for his wilful errors, and that invincible ignorance can never be imputed to him as a crime. Hence it should follow, that, in the eye of eternal justice, every man, who would have believed, had he had the opportunities of information, will appear as a believer ; and that none will be punished

nished for infidelity but those whose hearts refuse to admit the truth."

Such is the passage as it stands in my book ; on the perusal of which, your error must be evident to every reader. Your mistake lies, in that you understood, or would have others to understand, that, according to my notions, a person must be instructed in the existence of God, to believe in such existence : whereas my sentiments are very different. I say, that a man's understanding must be ripened, and his mind cultivated, to a certain degree, before he is in a capacity to comprehend the proofs of the existence of God, and more particularly so to enable him to discover them himself, without having been informed of them. I speak of barbarians and savages, and you object to me the case of philosophers. I say, that some degree of philosophy is necessary to elevate our minds to the ideas of the true God ; and you quote St. Paul against me, who acknowledges, that the pagan philosophers did acquire ideas of the true God. I say, that some men, of ignorant and uncultivated minds, may not be in a capacity to form just notions of the Deity ; and you say, that people properly instructed may form such notions ; and on these allegations, it is that you pronounce my opinion a manifest absurdity. How ! my lord, will you say that, because a professed Civilian ought to understand the laws of his country, it is absurd to suppose a child, who cannot read, can be ignorant of them ?

When a writer is careful to avoid perpetual repetition, and hath once clearly expressed

himself on any one point, he is not bound to recur always to the same proofs in reasoning on the same subject. The several parts of his writings serve to explain each other; and the latter, if he preserves any method, always suppose the former. This is what I have endeavoured always to do, and have particularly effected, as to the matter in question.

You suppose, with almost all those who treat these subjects, that man comes into the world with a perfect capacity of reasoning, and hath nothing to do but employ it. Now, this is not true; for reason is an acquisition, and that one of the slowest, of the human mind. Man learns to see with his intellectual as well as with his corporeal eyes: but he is much longer about the former than the latter; because the relations between intellectual objects, being not commensurable like those of material bodies, they are discoverable only by estimation, and because our first desires and necessities being merely physical, they do not make the examination of such objects sufficiently interesting. We must learn to view two objects at a time, and to form a comparison between them; we must even learn to compare a variety of objects together, to recur by degrees to their causes, and thence to trace them down to their effects; it is necessary for us to have combined an infinite number and diversity of relations, in order to acquire the ideas of agreement, proportion, harmony, and order. The man who, deprived of the assistance

assistance of his fellow-creatures, and incessantly occupied in providing for his necessities, is reduced to the simple progress of his own ideas, will make but little advances in this kind of knowledge ; he will grow old and die, without ever emerging from the infancy of reason. Now, can you sincerely believe, my lord, that out of a million of men, living and dying in that manner, there would be one who should attain a thought of God ?

The order of the universe, admirable as it is, doth not appear equally so to every eye. The vulgar pay but little attention to it, being in want of that knowledge which is necessary to render it apparent, and having never learned to reflect on what they see. It is neither perverseness, nor obstinacy, that prevent their being sensible of this wonderful harmony of things ; it is only ignorance and dullness. The least study fatigues such people, as the least manual labour fatigues the student. They have heard of the works of God and the wonders of nature. They repeat the same words indeed, but without annexing to them the same ideas ; and are but little affected by those circumstances that elevate the mind of the philosopher to the contemplation of his Creator. Now if, even among us, the common people, who have the opportunity of so much instruction, are still so very dull and stupid ; what must be the case with those poor people, who, being left to themselves from their infancy, have learnt nothing from others ? Can you believe that an Hottentot, or Laplander, philo-

philosophizes much on the revolutions of the planets and the generation of things? And yet the Hottentots and Lâplanders, living together in societies, have a multitude of acquired and communicated ideas, by the help of which they may form some-gross notions of a deity. They have some sort of a catechism; but a savage, wandering solitarily in the woods, can have none at all. You will say, perhaps, no such creature actually exists; be it so. He may be supposed, nevertheless, to exist; and certainly there are men in the world, who never entered into any kind of philosophical conversation in their lives, and whose whole time is spent in seeking out their subsistence, eating and sleeping. What shall we do with these people, the Eskimaux, for example? Shall we make theologists of them?

My opinion, therefore, is, that the human mind, such as it comes out of the hands of nature, destitute of instruction and improvement, is not in a capacity of itself to raise its ideas to the sublime conceptions of the Deity; but that these conceptions present themselves, in proportion as the mind is cultivated and enlightened. I am of opinion that God manifests himself, in his works, to all those who have thought and reflected thereon; that he reveals himself to every one that is enlightened by knowlege, in the prospect of the universe; that when our eyes are once opened to his works, we must wilfully shut them, to be blind to their great Author; that every atheistical philosopher must be insincere, or be blinded

blinded by pride ; but that a man, grossly incapacitated, though simple and sincere, whose mind is without error and without vice, may not be able, through involuntary ignorance, to raise his ideas to the author of his being, or form conceptions of God, without being subject to have this ignorance imputed to him as a crime, or being punishable for a fault in which his heart had no share. The one is not enlightened, and the other refuses to be so ; between which there appears to me a very wide difference.

Apply the passage you quoted from St. Paul to this opinion, and you will see that, instead of contradicting, it is perfectly consistent with, it : you will see that this passage relates solely to those pretended sages ; to whom the things that are to be known of God, have been made manifest ; and of whom he says, “ the invisible things of him, that is, his eternal power and Godhead, are seen by the creation of the world, being considered in his works, to the intent that they should be without excuse. But that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their thoughts, and their foolish heart was full of darkness ; who, while they professed themselves to be wise, became fools.”

The reason, for the apostle's reproaching the philosophers with not having glorified the true God, not being applicable to my supposition, is altogether in my favour ; and confirms what I have myself said, “ that every

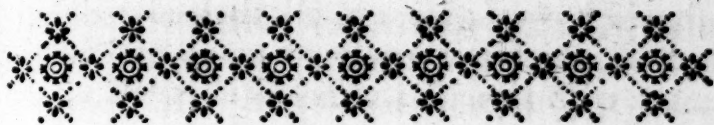
every philosopher who is an unbeliever is to blame, because he makes a bad use of the understanding he hath cultivated, and is in a capacity of understanding the truths he rejects." It appears, in fine, from the very passage itself that you did not understand me; and that you charge me with having said what I neither said nor thought; viz. that men believe in God only upon the authority of others*: in which you are so wide of the mark, that, on the contrary, I have only distinguished between the case wherein men may acquire the knowledge of God of themselves; and that in which they must be obliged to the assistance of others.

But, supposing, my lord, that you had been right in your criticism, and that you had solidly refuted my opinion, it would not thence follow that such opinion must be palpably absurd, as you are pleased to term it: a man may be mistaken without being extravagant or ridiculous, as every error is not an absurdity. My respect for your lordship makes me more sparing of my epithets: it is not my fault, also, if the reader should supply their omission.

* His lordship, indeed, doth not expressly say this; but it is the only meaning I can reasonably annex to his words, supported by those of St. Paul; and I can reply only to what I understand.



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CONTINUATION.

I T is thus, my Lord, proceeding always to censure without understanding me, you pass on from one imputation, equally false and important, to another which is more so. After having unjustly accused me of denying the evidence of the Deity, you charge me, still more unjustly, with calling in question his unity. Nay, on this head you go still farther, and take the pains, contrary to your usual custom, of entering into an argument on the subject; the only part of your Mandate, where you have Reason on your side, being that wherein you refute an extravagant position which I never laid down.

The passage you object to is this; or rather the passage in which you relate mine; for the Reader must remember, it is your Lordship that always sets me forth. “ I believe, *he makes the same imaginary personage say*, that the world is governed by a wise and powerful Will. I see it, or rather I feel it; and this is of importance for me to know: But is the world eternal, or is it created? Are things derived from one self-sufficient principle, or are there two or more? And what is their essence? Of all this I know nothing, nor do I see it is of any consequence

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I should*. — I give up all such idle disquisitions, which serve only to make me discontented with myself, are useless in practice, and above my comprehension."

I must here observe, by the way, that this is the second time you call the Savoyard Curate a chimerical or supposed personage. Pray, my Lord, how do you know this to be the case? I have asserted what I knew; you have ventured to deny what you know nothing of: Which of us is, in this case, the most daring? It is well known, I confess, that there are few Priests who believe in God; it is not therefore proved, however, that there are none at all. But, to proceed with your Mandate.

"What is it this daring Author means to say?—The unity of God appears to him a futile and indeterminate question; as if the notion of a multiplicity of Gods was not the greatest of absurdities. *The plurality of Gods*, says Tertullian very expressively, *tends to the nullity of God*. To admit a God is to admit a supreme independent Being, to whom all other Beings are subordinate†. This Writer in-

* This break indicates an omission of two lines, by which the passage is moderated, and which the Archbishop would not transcribe. See Mandate, page 19, and Emilius, vol. iii. page 47.

† Tertullian is here guilty of a sophism very common with the Fathers. He defines the word *God* after the manner of the Christians, and then accuses the Pagans of contradiction, because, contrary to his definition, they admit of many gods. It was not worth while to impute an error to me which I have not committed, merely to introduce so unseasonably a sophism of Tertullian.

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finuates, therefore, that there are many Gods."

But who is it says, there are many Gods? Ah! my Lord, you would have been glad, very probably, that I had been guilty of such an absurdity; in which case, you certainly would not have taken the pains to write a Mandate against me.

I neither know how, nor why, things are as they are; and many others, who pique themselves on explaining their causes, know just as little as myself. But I can evidently see, there is but one first moving cause, as every thing clearly tends to the same end. I acknowledge, therefore, the existence of one sole supreme Will, which directs and governs all things; and one sole supreme Power, which animates and influences all things. I attribute this Power and Will to one and the same Being; because of their perfect agreement and union, which is more easily conceived in one than in two; and because it is unreasonable to admit of more Beings than are necessary. And indeed, even the Evil itself, of which we are sensible, is not absolute, and is so far from operating fundamentally against the Good, that it concurs with it to the production of universal harmony.

But the reason why things are, is precisely to be distinguished under two ideas, viz. the thing which makes, and the thing which is made: Nay, it requires some considerable effort of the mind, to unite these two ideas in the same object; as we cannot conceive how any thing acts, without supposing, at the same

time, the existence of some other Being on which it acts. It is farther certain, that we have ideas of two distinct substances, viz. Matter and Spirit; of a thinking substance and an extended substance; and these two ideas are very easily conceived, the one without the other.

There are, therefore, two methods, in which we may conceive the origin of things, either as they proceed from two different causes, the one alive, the other dead; the one moving, the other moved; the one active, the other passive; the one efficient, the other instrumental: or otherwise, as they are derived from one sole cause, possessed, in itself, of every thing which is, and every thing which is made. Neither of these opinions, however, though so long agitated by the Metaphysicians, can be easily reconciled to human reason: for, if the eternal and necessary existence of matter hath its difficulties, the creation of it must be attended with no less; the philosophers who have in all ages meditated on this subject, having unanimously rejected the possibility of its creation; except a very small number, perhaps, who appear to have sincerely submitted their reason to authority: though, whether these were truly sincere or not, the motives of interest, ease, or security, render justly doubtful; and, indeed, it will be impossible to come to any assurance on this head, so long as we run a risk in speaking the truth.

On the supposition, that things are derived from one sole eternal principle; this principle being

being simple in its essence, cannot be a compound of matter and spirit, but is either matter or spirit alone. Now, from the deductions of the Savoyard Curate, he cannot conceive, that this principle should be matter; and, if it be spirit, he cannot conceive how matter could receive its being from such a cause; for, to this end, it is necessary to conceive its creation: Now, the idea of creation, viz. the idea by which we conceive that, from a simple act of volition, nothing becomes something, is, of all ideas that are not evidently contradictory, the least comprehensible to the human mind.

Beset by such difficulties on both sides, the good Priest remained undetermined, resolving not to perplex himself with doubts of mere speculation, which could have no manner of influence on his moral duties. For, after all, to what purpose should I explain the origin of things, provided I know in what manner they actually subsist; if I know my own place among them, and, in consequence of that, the obligations imposed on me?

But should we even suppose two original principles* (a supposition, however, which the Curate doth not make) we should not thereby suppose the existence of two Gods; unless, indeed, we supposed, with the Mani-

* He who knows only two substances, can imagine the existence only of two principles; so that the words, *or more*, annexed, are, in some measure, expletive, serving to intimate, that it is of as little consequence to know the number of these principles as their nature.

cheans, that these principles are both active; a doctrine diametrically opposite to that of our Curate, who very positively, and in the most express terms, admits only of one first intelligence, one active principle, and, of course, but one God.

I must own, indeed, that, the creation of the world being clearly related in our translations of the book of Genesis, to reject that account, would be to reject the authority, if not of the holy Scriptures, at least of the translations given us of them; and this is the very reason of the Curate's retaining those doubts, which might not have arisen without such authority. For, setting this consideration aside, the co-existence of two principles * serves better to explain the constitution of the universe, and to remove those difficulties which cannot be solved without it; and particularly, among others, that of the origin of evil. Add to this, that we

* It may not be amiss to remark, that this question about the eternity of matter, which so startles our modern Divines, gave but little concern to the Fathers, whose sentiments were more similar to those of Plato. Not to speak of Justin Martyr, Origen, and others, Clement Alexandrine takes the side of the affirmative so strongly in his Hypotyposes, that Photius would have it, on this account, that his book had been interpolated. The same opinion, however, appears again in the Stromates, where Clement relates that of Heraclitus without amendment. This Father, indeed, endeavours, in the fifth book, to establish one sole principle; but this is because he refuses to give that name to matter, even admitting its eternity.

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ought to be perfectly acquainted with the Hebrew tongue, and even to have been contemporary with Moses, to know precisely what sense he attached to the word, which is rendered to us *created*. This term is too philosophical to have had originally that known and popular acceptation, which we give it, at present, on the credit of our divines. The acceptation of this term may have been changed, and have misled even the Septuagint themselves, possessed as they already were with the terms and questions of the Greek Philosophy. Nothing is more common than for words to change their meaning in process of time ; and thereby cause us to attribute to ancient authors, who have used them, ideas they never entertained. It is very doubtful whether the Greek word was used in the sense we please to give it ; and it is very certain that the Latin term had not the same sense, as Lucretius, who expressly denies the possibility of all *creation*, makes frequent use of the same term to express the formation of the universe and its parts. In fine, M. de Beausobre hath proved, that the notion of Creation is not to be met with in the ancient Jewish Theology ; and you have too much learning, my Lord, to be ignorant, that many writers, who have had the greatest respect for the sacred writings, have not been able, nevertheless, to discover the absolute creation of the universe, in the account given by Moses. Thus our Curate, who was not imposed on by the arbitrary authority of the divines, might very well doubt, without being

ing the less orthodox, whether there existed two eternal first principles, or only one.

This is, indeed, a matter purely philological and philosophical, in which revelation hath nothing to do. Be this, however, as it will, this is not a subject of dispute between you and me. I do not undertake to defend the sentiments of the Curate; but to point out the fallacies and mistakes of your Lordship.

Now, you are totally in the wrong, to advance that the unity of God appeared to me an idle question, and above the human understanding; as in the very work you condemn, this unity is established and maintained by argument. Again, you are quite wrong in bringing the testimony of Tertullian, to prove against me, that the passage in question implies there are many Gods; for without having recourse to Tertullian, I agree with you that it doth imply there are many Gods. You are wrong, nevertheless, to call me, on this account, rash and daring: For where there is no positive assertion there can be no temerity. Is it to be conceived that an Author must be stigmatized with presumption, only for being less presumptuous than yourself.

You are farther wrong in conceiving that you have justified those particular tenets, which attribute human passions to the Deity, and which, so far from clearing up our notions of that Great Being, serve only to obscure and debase them. You are wrong in falsely accusing me of perplexing and debasing those notions; of contraverting the divine essence which I have not contraverted, and of calling in
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doubt his unity which I never questioned. But supposing I had done it, what is the consequence? To recriminate on others is not to justify one's self! but he whose sole defence is to accuse the supposed criminal, may very justly be suspected of being the only one who is guilty.

The contradiction you reproach me with, in the same passage, is also as ill founded as the preceding accusation. "He knows, say you, nothing of the nature of God, and yet presently after he acknowledges this Supreme Being to be possessed of intelligence, power, will, and goodness; is not this to have an idea of the divine nature?"

The answer I shall make your Lordship on this head is as follows. "God is intelligent; but in what manner? Man is intelligent by the act of reasoning, but the supreme Intelligence lies under no necessity to reason. He requires neither premises nor consequences; not even the simple form of a proposition: His knowledge is purely intuitive; he beholds equally what is and will be; all truths are to him as one idea, as all places are but one point, and all times one moment. Human power acts by the use of means, the divine power in and of itself. God is powerful because he is willing, his will constituting his power. God is good, nothing is more manifest than this truth, goodness in man, however, consists in a love to his fellow creatures, and the goodness of God in a love of order: For it is on such order that the connection and preservation of all things depend. Again, God is just; this I am fully convinced of, as it is the natural con-

sequence of his goodness. The injustice of men is their own work, not his ; and that moral disorder, which, in the judgment of some philosophers, makes against the system of providence, is in mine the strongest argument for it. Justice in man, indeed, is to render every one his due ; but the justice of God requires, at the hands of every one, an account of the talents with which he has entrusted him.

In the discovery, however, by the force of reason, of those divine attributes, of which I have no absolute idea, I only affirm what I do not clearly comprehend, which is in effect to affirm nothing. I may say, it is true that God is this or that ; I may be sensible of it, and fully convinced within myself that he is so. I am yet never the better able to conceive how, or in what manner he is so.

In short, the greater efforts I make to contemplate his infinite essence, the less I am able to conceive it : But I am certain that he is, and that is sufficient ; the more he surpasses my conceptions, the more I adore him. I humble myself before him, and say, “ Being of
“ Beings, I am, because thou art ; to meditate
“ continually on thee is to elevate my thoughts
“ to the fountain of existence. The most
“ meritorious use of my reason is to be anni-
“ hilated before thee : It is the delight of my
“ soul to feel my weak faculties overcome
“ by the splendor of thy greatness.”

Such is my answer, and I flatter myself it is satisfactory. Will it be necessary for me
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to tell your Lordship from whence it is taken? I have taken it, word for word, from the very passage, wherein you accuse me of contradiction* ; and you have made just such a use of it, as all my adversaries do, who transcribe the objections I myself raise, and suppress my solutions. Their answer is therefore already written, and is contained in the work they refute. But we advance, my Lord, to the discussion of matters of the utmost importance.

After having attacked my system, and my book, you make an attack also on my religion; and because the Roman Catholick Curate had objections against his church, you endeavour to make me pass for an enemy to mine; as if, to propose the difficulties attending any particular opinion, were to renounce it; as if all human knowledge had not its particular difficulties; as if even Geometry itself were entirely free from them, or that the Geometricians made it a rule to be silent, lest they should depreciate the certainty of their art.

The answer I have ready to make, is to declare, with my usual frankness and sincerity, my sentiments with respect to religion; such as I have constantly professed them to be in all my writings, and such as they have always been both on my lips and in my heart. Nay, I will go still farther, and declare why I published the Curate's creed; and why, in spite of all the clamours that have been raised

* Emilius, Vol. iii. page 73.

against it, I shall ever esteem it to be the best and most useful performance this age hath produced. Neither persecution, nor arrets, shall ever make me change my tone; the Divines, in bidding me be humble, shall not make me an hypocrite; nor shall the Philosophers, by taxing me with hypocrisy, make me profess myself an infidel. I will speak of my religion, because I have one. And I will speak of it boldly, because I have the courage to declare what it is; and it were to be wished, for the happiness of mankind, it were that of the whole human race.

My Lord, I am a Christian, a sincere Christian, according to the doctrine of the Gospel. I am a Christian, not as a disciple of Priests, but as a disciple of Jesus' Christ. My great master refined but little on doctrinal tenets, but insisted strongly on moral obligations. He prescribed fewer articles of Faith than good works; he commanded us to believe only so much as is necessary to make us good. When he superseded the Law and the Prophets, it was more by acts of virtue than articles of Belief. And he hath told me, as well in his own words, as by those of his Apostles, "That whoso loveth his brother hath fulfilled the Law."

With regard to myself, being firmly convinced of the essential truths of Christianity, which are the foundation of all good morality, I endeavour to nourish my heart with the spirit of the Gospel, without perplexing my head about what appears in it dark and obscure; and being as fully persuaded, that whosoever loveth
 God

God above all things, and his neighbour as himself, is a true Christian, I strive to prove myself such, laying aside all those doctrinal subtilties, those important trifles with which the Pharises so perplex our duty and confound our belief; placing, with St. Paul, even Faith itself below Charity.

Happy in having been educated in a religion the most rational and pure upon earth, I remain inviolably attached to the worship of my fathers: Like them, I take scripture and reason for the only rules of Faith: Like them, I pay no implicit regard to human authority, nor subscribe to their formulas till I perceive the truth of them: Like them, I heartily join with the true servants of Jesus Christ, and the real worshipers of God, to pay him homage, with the communion of the faithful, in his church. It is pleasing and consolatory, to be numbered among its members, to assist in this publick worship of the Deity, and to reflect, while I am in the midst of them, here am I with my brethren.

Penetrated with due respect for a worthy pastor, who, resisting the torrent of example, and judging in the truth, hath not excluded from his church, a defender of God's cause, I shall preserve to the latest hour of my life a grateful remembrance of charity so truly christian. I shall ever think it an honour to be numbered among his flock, and hope never to bring a scandal on its members, either by my sentiments, or conduct. But when injurious Priests arrogate to themselves a power to which they have no just pretensions, when they take
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upon them to dictate what I shall believe, and insolently bid me explain this, disown that, retract my words, or disguise my meaning; their arrogance hath no effect on my sincerity; they cannot make me be guilty of falsehood in order to be orthodox, or to say what I do not think merely to please them. And tho' my veracity may give them so much offence as to make them eager to cut me off from the church, I am little terrified by a menace, which it is not in their power to put in execution. They cannot prevent my heart from being united to the faithful; they cannot blot out my name from among the elect, if it be written in that number. They may deprive me, indeed, of many of the comforts of this life, but they cannot deprive me of my hope in that which is to come; where it is my most sincere and ardent wish to have Jesus Christ himself the umpire and judge between them and me.

Such, my Lord, are my real sentiments; which, however, I do not lay down as a rule for others, but only declare them to be mine, and that such they will remain, as long as it pleases, not men, but God, who alone is capable of changing my heart and mind. For so long as I may be what I am, and think as I now do, I shall speak as I now speak. Very different, I must own, is this conduct to that of your nominal Christians; who are always ready to believe, or to say, what their ease, or interest, require them to say or believe; being satisfied they are good Christians enough, provided their writings are not burnt, and no arret be issued

issued out against them. They live like people firmly persuaded, that it is not merely necessary they should confess this or that article, but that such confession is sufficient to entitle them to heaven; whereas I am persuaded, on the contrary, that the essential part of religion consists in the discharge of practical duty, and that it is not merely necessary that a man should be just, compassionate, humane, and charitable, but that whoever is truly so, believes enough for his salvation. As for the rest, indeed, I must own their doctrine is much more commodious than mine, and that it would cost a man much less trouble to get himself ranked among the number of the faithful for his opinions than for his virtues.

Whether I ought to have kept my sentiments on these matters to myself, as it is incessantly told me, or whether, when I had the courage to publish and own them, I attacked the laws and disturbed the peace of society, we shall enquire presently. But before I enter on this enquiry, permit me to entreat your Lordship, and every reader of this letter, to place some confidence in the solemn declarations of a friend to truth, and not to follow the example of those, who, without proof or probability, and solely on the suggestions of their own hearts, accuse me of atheism and irreligion, and that in contradiction to the most serious and positive protestations, and which nothing on my part ever rendered suspected. I should not think I have the appearance of a man who disguises his sentiments; nor is it easy to see what interest I can have in so doing.

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It ought to be presumed, at least, that a man, who expresses himself so freely concerning what he doth not believe, must be sincere in what he actually professes; and that when his conversation, his actions, and his writings all perfectly agree on this head, whoever shall dare to affirm, he is guilty of falsehood, without having the omniscience of the Deity, must be guilty of a notorious falsehood himself.

I had not always the happiness of a retired life; I have mixed with people of all characters, have known men of all parties, believers of all sects, and freethinkers of all systems. I have seen the high and the low, the libertine and the philosopher. I have had friends who have been sincere, and others who were not so: I have been beset with spies and with enemies; and the world is full of people who hate me for the injuries they have done me. I conjure them all, notwithstanding, of what kind soever, publicly to declare, what they know of my belief as to matters of religion; to declare, whether during the most constant familiarity, the most intimate connection, whether in the midst of convivial gaiety, or in the most secret confidence of private conversation, they ever found me different from myself in this respect. Let them declare, if, when they were pleased to rally or argue with me, they found me at any time affected with their arguments or raileries; if they ever caught me varying in my sentiments, or if they could discover any thing in the bottom of my heart, which I concealed from the public. Let them say, if, at any time whatever, they have found in me even
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the shadow of imposture or hypocrisy; let them declare what they know, and expose me to the world. I not only consent to it, but beg them to do it; dispensing with every obligation they may think themselves under to the contrary. Let them speak out boldly, not what they would have me be, but what they know I am. Let them judge of me from their consciences; I am not afraid to trust my honour in their hands, and promise to take no exceptions at what they may truly aver.

Let those who charge me with the want of religion, because they themselves have none and cannot conceive how others can have any; let these, I say, first agree, if they can, among themselves. Some of them discover only an atheistical system in my works; others again pretend, that in my writings I aim at glorifying God without believing in him in my heart. They tax my writings with impiety, and my sentiments with hypocrisy. But if I publickly teach atheism, I am not in that, according to their notions, an hypocrite; and if I affect to believe what I do not, in that I inculcate no impiety. Thus by comparing their contradictory imputations, their calumny exposes itself; but malevolence is blind, and passion is incapable of reason. I do not, indeed, pretend to that degree of faith, which is so much the boast of persons of indifferent probity, that implicit belief, which hesitates at nothing, but readily admits of every thing that is proposed to it, and throws aside, or dissembles concerning those objections it cannot resolve. I have not the happiness to see
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in revelation the evidence they pretend to find there; and if I declare myself in its favour, it is because my heart induces me to it, because it presents nothing to me but consolation, and because there appear to me as many difficulties in rejecting it; but it is not because its evidence appears to me demonstrative; for in reality it doth not. Indeed I am not sufficiently learned ever to understand a demonstration, which requires such profound erudition, to deduce and comprehend. Is it not, however, very whimsical to conclude, that I, who openly profess my doubts and objections, am an hypocrite, and that those people who are so very positive, and who decide so absolutely on most points, and are so certain of every thing, without having better proof than myself; that those people, in short, who are not a jot more learned than I am, and who, without obviating my objections, reproach me with proposing them, should be accounted sincere?

But to what end should I be a hypocrite, and what should I gain by it; I have openly made an attack on particular interests, have stirred up all parties against me; the cause of God and of humanity, is what I have maintained, and who is there concerns himself about that? What I have written on this subject hath not made the least impression; nor is there a soul who thinks himself obliged to me for it. Had I declared myself openly in favour of atheism, the devotees could not have used me worse, and my other enemies, not less dangerous, would not have given my reputation such frequent stabs in secret. Had I
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declared myself openly in favour of atheism, the one party would have attacked me with more reserve, in seeing me defended by the other, and observing me disposed in myself to revenge : But a man who fears God, is himself little to be feared ; his party is not formidable ; he is alone, or nearly so, and the world may safely do him a great deal of wrong, before he will think of returning it. Had I declared myself openly in favour of atheism, in thus separating myself from the church, I should at once have deprived its Ministers of the means of incessantly harrassing me, and making me bear all the little airs of their ecclesiastical tyranny : I should not have been subject to so many idle censures ; but instead of so furiously condemning my writings, they would have been under the necessity of refuting them, which would not have been quite so easy. In short, had I declared myself openly in favour of atheism, they would at first have made a little clamour, which would have soon subsided, and I should have been soon at peace, as have been all others ; the people of God would have taken no cognizance of me, nor thought they did me a favour, in not treating me as a person excommunicated ; so that I should thus have been quit with the world. The Saints of Israel would not have writ me anonymous letters, venting their charity in pious abuses ; they would not have taken the trouble to assure me, in all meekness and humility, that I was a wicked wretch, an execrable monster, and that it had been but too happy for the world, had some good Christian

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Christian but taken care to stifle me in my cradle. Again, the well-meaning part of mankind, regarding me, on their part, as a reprobate, would never have tormented themselves, or me, to bring me back into the right way; they would not have pulled me to the right and to the left, nor have wearied me out with their remonstrances; they would not have reduced me to the necessity of commending their zeal, while I condemned their importunity, or of gratefully acknowledging they were called, to plague me to death with their good-will.

No, my Lord, to be an hypocrite, I must be both a madman and a fool; I should be mad to turn impostor for any thing I require of mankind; and a consummate fool, not to see that the method I have taken, could lead only to misfortunes in this life; and that, if even I might reap some advantages by it, I could not do it without contradicting myself. It is not too late, indeed, to take these advantages now; I need only bring myself to impose on the world for a moment, and I might triumph over my enemies. I am not as yet arrived at old age, and may possibly have long to suffer; the public opinion respecting me may change once again: But if I ever arrive at honours or fortune, by whatever means I may attain them, I shall then be assuredly an hypocrite.

A friend to truth doth not stake his reputation on one opinion, or another; whatever he says, provided it be what he thinks, conduces to his purpose. He who is interested only in being sincere, hath no temptation to deceive;

deceive; and there is no man of common sense, who doth not prefer the most simple method when it is also the most certain. My enemies may make the most of their abuse; they will not be able to deprive me of the honour of being a man who speaks truth on all occasions; of being the only author of these times, as well as of many preceding ages, that hath written sincerely, and hath said only what he believed. They may, for a while, sully my reputation by dint of false reports and calumnies; it will, sooner or later, however, triumph over them; for, while they will be varying in their ridiculous imputations, I shall remain the same, and, without any other art than my native frankness, shall have it always in my power to disappoint them.

“ But this frankness, it may be said, is unseasonable, with regard to the publick. The truth is not to be spoken at all times: And tho’ sensible people may be of your opinion, it is not proper the vulgar should adopt such sentiments.” Such are the reflections which are made me on all sides; and perhaps such is the reflection you yourself would make me, were we alone in your closet. Such changeable creatures are men! They vary their language as they do their habit, and speak the truth only in their night-gowns. When they are dressed, they are equipped only to deceive, and are not only knaves and impostors in the face of the world, but are not ashamed to punish, against the dictates of their own consciences, every one who dares not be as knavish, and
deceitful

deceitful as themselves. But is the maxim itself true, that truth ought not to be spoken at all times? or rather, that all truth ought not to be divulged? Were it also true; would it thence follow that no error should be disproved? or that the extravagancies of mankind are so sacred, that we should respect them all without exception? This is a point which ought to be examined; before I admit so vague and suspicious a maxim; which, were it true in itself, might be rendered false by misapplication. I have a great inclination, my Lord, to adopt here my usual method, and to give the history of my ideas, as a reply to my accusers; for I conceive, I cannot more fully justify all I have dared to say, than by repeating all I have dared to think.

No sooner was I of an age to observe mankind, than I took notice of their actions, and listened to their discourse; when, seeing their behaviour agreed but little with their conversation, I endeavoured to find out the reason of that difference; and discovered, that to be and to appear, were two things as different as those of speaking and acting; this latter difference being the cause of the former, and arising itself from a cause which remains to be pointed out.

This I found to exist in the present defective state of society, in every respect contrary to nature, which nothing can totally suppress; incessantly tyrannizing over her, and forcing her to reclaim her just rights. I traced the consequences of this contradiction, and saw that

that it was alone sufficient to account for all the vices of individuals, and all the evils of society. Hence I concluded, it was unnecessary to suppose men naturally wicked, when I could thus trace the origin and progress of their depravity. These reflections naturally conducted me to farther researches into the human mind, considered in a state of civil society; in which I found that the cultivation of science, and the propagation of vice went hand in hand together, and increased in the same proportion, not indeed with regard to individuals but to a whole people; a distinction which I have always been careful to make, though none of my opponents have attended to it.

I sought the truth in books; but there I found nothing but falsehood and errors. I consulted authors themselves; but these were mere quacks, who diverted themselves with imposing on mankind; who had no rule of action but self-interest, and had no other God than reputation; ever ready to decry and calumniate the great who did not treat them as they pleased, and still more ready to lavish panegyric indiscriminately on those who might hire them.

By attending on those who were authorized to speak in public, I soon found they were either afraid or unwilling to say any thing disagreeable to those by whom they were authorised; and that, being hired by the Strong to direct the Weak, they could only speak to the latter of their duties, and to the former of their privileges. Thus public instruction will always tend to imposture, so
long

long as those who administer it find their interest in deceit; and it is for them only that the truth is not proper to be spoken. But wherefore should I be an accomplice with men of this stamp?

Are there any public prejudices which ought to be respected? This may possibly be; but it must be when those prejudices are so intimately connected with the order of society, that they cannot be eradicated without rooting up, at the same time, those things by which they are counteracted; so that it may be expedient to permit the evil, on account of the good. But when things are brought to such a situation, that every change must be for the better, can there be any prejudices so respectable, that we must sacrifice to them, reason, virtue, justice, and all the benefits, which truth may be productive of, to mankind? For my part, I have engaged myself to speak the truth, whenever it may be useful, as far as it is in my power: This is an engagement also which I ought to fulfil, to the utmost of my abilities, and which no one can fulfil in my stead; because every one being equally bound to all, no one can discharge the obligation of another. "Divine truth, saith St. Augustin, is neither mine, yours, nor his, but belongs to us all, on whom it forcibly calls to act in concert, to make it known to the world, under the penalty of being useless to ourselves, if we do not communicate it to others: for whoever would appropriate to himself a blessing which God would have every one enjoy, loses by that

that very usurpation the good of which he robs the public, and finds himself involved in error, for having betrayed the truth."

Mankind ought not to be instructed by halves. If they ought to remain in error, why ought they not to be left in ignorance? To what purpose are there so many schools and universities, to teach them what they ought not to know? What is the design of your colleges, your academies, and so many other learned institutions? Is it merely to amuse and deceive the public, by vitiating their reason, and preventing their discovery of the truth? Yes, ye Professors of Falshood, it is to abuse, that ye pretend to instruct, us, and, like the merciless robbers who hang up lanterns on the rocks to deceive the unhappy mariner, ye light us on to destruction.

Such were my notions when I first took up the pen, and in laying it down, I have no reason to change my sentiments. I have always observed, that the mode of public instruction had two essential defects, which it is impossible to remove. The one is, the insincerity of the instructors; and the other, the blindness of the instructed. If men without passions were to instruct men without prejudices, their knowledge might indeed be more confined, but it would be more certain, and reason would always bear the sway. Now, the interest of publick instructors will be ever the same, but the prejudices of the people, having no fixed foundation, are variable, and may be altered, perverted, augmented, or diminished.

nished. It is only on this side, therefore, that instruction can have any certain hold of mankind, and it is to this every friend to truth should incline. He may have some hope of making the people more reasonable, but can have none of making their leaders more honest.

I have seen the same deceit prevail in religion as in politicks, and have been much more concerned at it. The evils of government may render its subjects miserable only upon earth; but who knows how far mistakes in point of conscience may not be injurious to unhappy mortals hereafter? I have observed the world full of creeds, tenets, and modes of worship, all followed without any real belief therein; and have seen that, nothing of all these affecting either the understanding or the heart, they had but very little influence on moral conduct. I must speak to you, my Lord, on this head without disguise. The true believer cannot accommodate himself to this grimace: He is sensible that man is an intelligent being, requiring a reasonable worship, and that he is a social being, whose system of morals should be adapted to the purposes of humanity. Let us find, in the first place, this worship and this morality; which would be applicable to mankind in general: If, after this, it be requisite to distinguish them into national forms, we should examine into their foundations, relations, and conveniencies, and, after having determined what are the religion and morality of the man, determine what are those of the citizen. In doing this, we should be particularly
careful

careful not to imitate your good friend M. *Joli de Fleury*, who, to establish his Jansenism, would root up all natural law and moral obligation : so that, according to him, a contract between a Christian and an Infidel must be void, because there is no law common to both.

Hence I saw there were two methods of examining and comparing different religions ; the one relative to the truth and falsehood they contained, either with regard to the natural and supernatural facts on which they were established, or with regard to the ideas we derive from reason, of the Supreme Being, and the religious worship he requires of us : The other relative to their moral and temporal effects upon earth, according to the good or evil they might be of to society, and to mankind. Now, we must not, in order to prevent this two-fold examination, begin by affirming, that both these things go together, and that the truest religion is also the most salutary for society ; this being precisely the point in question : nor ought men to raise an outcry of impiety and atheism against those who treat this question ; as it is one thing to believe, and another to examine into the effects of our belief.

It appears very certain, indeed, that if man be naturally formed for society, the truest religion must be also the most social and humane ; for God would certainly have us to be what he made us ; and if it be true that we are naturally wicked, we should be disobedient to him in wishing to be otherwise. Add to this, that religion, considered as a kind of relation

between God and man, cannot contribute to the glory of the former, but by the happiness of the latter, because the other term of the relation, which is God, is above every thing that man can do either for or against it.

This opinion, however, probable as it is, is subject to great difficulties, on account of historical facts which contradict each other. The Jews were enemies by birth to all other people, and founded their own establishment on the destruction of seven nations, according to the express orders which they received from God. Again, the Christians have had their holy wars, and war is undoubtedly destructive to mankind: All parties have persecuted and been persecuted in their turn, and persecution is undoubtedly hurtful to mankind: Many sects of them profess, and make a merit of celibacy; but celibacy is undoubtedly so hurtful to mankind, that if it were adopted universally, the whole human race must perish *. If these

• Chastity and continence have their use, even with regard to population; it is always good to have the command over one's self; hence a state of virginity is always respectable; but it does not thence follow, that it is good or commendable to persevere in that state during life, in contradiction to nature and the end of our being. We have generally more respect for a marriageable girl than for a young married woman; but we have more for a mother of a family than for an old maid; and this appears to me very reasonable. As we do not marry so soon as we are born, nor is it proper to marry very young, a state of virginity, which all ought to support and esteem, is useful and necessary, as it is salutary and honourable, but it is

these considerations be not sufficient to authorize us to decide concerning religion, they afford a sufficient reason for us to examine into it; and I require nothing else but permission to make this examination. I neither say nor think, that there is no good religion upon earth; but I affirm, and it is but too true, that there never has been a religion publickly established which hath not given the most cruel wounds to humanity. All parties have occasionally tormented their fellow creatures, and offered human sacrifices to the Deity. What ever may be the source of these contradictions, certain it is they subsist; and can it be a crime to wish their removal? Chastity never thirsts after blood, nor doth the love of one's neighbour inspire us with the thoughts of massacre. In like manner, it is not zeal for the salvation of souls that is the cause of persecution; pride, arrogance, and self-love are

is so only with a view, at a proper time, to bestow its purity on that of marriage. How! with it be said, with an air of triumphant raillery, do these old batchelors pretend to preach up the obligations of matrimony? Why do not they themselves marry? Very true, why do they not, indeed? It is because your absurd institutions have made a state, which is sacred and delightful in itself, so ridiculous and unhappy, that it is almost impossible to support it without being either a knave or a fool. Ye sceptres of iron, absurd laws! it is you whom we may reproach for our not having fulfilled our duties on earth: it is from us the cry of nature is heard against your barbarity. How can you presumptuously reproach us with the misery to which you have reduced us?

the cause. The more unreasonable any religion is, the more it is propagated by force: He who professes absurd tenets cannot bear that others should see them represented in their true light. Reason, in such a case, becomes the greatest of crimes, and must, at all events, be suppressed, as men are ashamed to want it in the eyes of others. Thus absurdity and persecution have the same source. Mankind must be constantly terrified and intimidated. Leave them a moment to the use of their reason, and you are undone.

On this consideration alone, it appears to me an act of public good, to instruct people, under such circumstances, to reason on the subject of religion: for by so doing, they are instructed in their moral obligations, persecution is deprived of its sting, and humanity is restored to its native rights. To this end, however, it is necessary to recur to general principles, to such as are common to all mankind; for if, when you begin to reason, you lay any stress on the authority of Priests, you put a sword into her hand, and furnish her with the means of persecution.

Those who love peace also should never recur to the authority of books. This is the way never to come to any determination. Books have been the source of inexhaustible disputes. Take a view of the histories of nations; and you will find that such as had no books had no disputes among them. Would you subject mankind to human authority, they would all be so differently affected by it, that tho' every one should be possessed of the greatest
sincerity

sincerity and the soundest judgment, it would be impossible for them ever to agree. Never reason, therefore, on the maxims or arguments of others. Human language is not sufficiently clear and explicit: Not even God himself, should he deign to speak to us after our mode of speech, could say any thing which would not afford us some occasion for dispute.

Our languages are the work of men, and men are creatures of confined talents. Our languages are the work of men, and men are deceitful. Hence, as there is no truth so clearly announced, but that chicanery will find it in some degree equivocal, so there is no falshood so gross that it may not be supported by some pretended reasoning.

We will suppose, for instance, that a man should surprize us at midnight, by declaring it to be broad day; our surprize would, doubtless, be accompanied with laughter, and we should treat him with ridicule; but give him only time and means to establish a sect, and sooner or later you would see his partizans labouring to prove that he was in the right. They would say, that when he pronounced it was day, it certainly was so in some part of the world or other; and nothing could be more true. Others again might refine upon the assertion, and maintain, that, as there are always some particles of light scattered up and down in the atmosphere, it is day-light even all night long. And thus a number of subtle casuists joining in the dispute, they would presently make you see the sun shine at midnight. This evidence, indeed, might not prevail uni-

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versally;

verfally; the debate degenerating, according to custom, into cruelty and bloodshed. One party would be for the explication, another againſt it; one would be for taking the matter in a figurative ſenſe, and the other in a ſimple one. Some would ſay, he affirmed at midnight, that it was then day, and it was night. Others would ſay, he affirmed at midnight that it was day, and it was day. Each would tax his opponent with infincerity and obſtinacy: A battle or maſſacre muſt end the diſpute; ſtreams of blood would flow on all ſides; and if the new ſect ſhould in the end be victorious, it would be demonſtrated that it is day at midnight. Such is the hiſtory of almoſt all the quarrels that have ariſen about religion.

The innovations of moſt religious ſectaries have been eſtabliſhed by fanaticiſm, and maintained by hypocrify; hence it is that they are ſo repugnant to reaſon and virtue. Enthuſiaſm never reaſons; ſo that, whiſt its frenzy laſts, any thing goes down, nor is it very nice about articles of faith. Its method alſo is extremely convenient; doctrines are ſo eaſily adopted, and morals ſo difficult to praſtiſe, that, taking the eaſieſt way, they ſupply the want of good works by the merit of an implicit faith. But after all, fanaticiſm is a critical ſtate which cannot laſt for ever. It hath its fits long and ſhort, more or leſs frequent; and hath its intermiſſions, during which indifference prevails. During theſe intervals, the believer comes a little to himſelf, and is aſtoniſhed to find himſelf ſurrounded with ſuch a heap of abſurdities. But the religion is eſtabliſhed,
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its forms prescribed, laws are enacted in support of them, and transgressions are punished. Who will venture to stand up, of himself, to protest against all these? to except against the laws of his country, and deny the religion of his fathers? It is held more prudent to submit in silence; it is our interest to be of the opinion of those whose possessions we are to inherit. Every one acts the same farce, therefore, with his neighbours; laughing in his sleeve at what he affects publicly to revere. Such, my Lord, is the behaviour of the greater part of the professors of most religions, and particularly of yours; and such is my key to the inconsistency, which is so remarkable between their doctrines and their practice. Their belief is all affectation, and their manners the same as their faith.

Why is it that one man is interested to take cognizance of the belief of another, or the state of that of the citizens? It is, doubtless, because it is supposed, that our faith hath an influence on our morals, and that on our ideas of the life to come, depends our conduct in the present. But, if this be not the case, of what consequence is our belief, or the affectation of it? The appearance of religion is no longer of any other use than to dispense with the reality.

In a state of society, every one is entitled to inform himself, whether another believes himself under any obligation to be just; the sovereign having the right to examine into the reasons on which every one founds such obligation.

gation. Add to this, that established national forms ought to be observed; this is what I have particularly insisted on. But with regard to opinions merely speculative, and that have no influence on morals, and which do not tend to the transgression of the laws; every person should be at liberty to think as he pleased, nor would any one be either entitled or interested, to dictate their sentiments to others. Thus, for example, should any person, tho' invested with authority, come to ask me my opinion concerning the famous question of the hypostatical union; of which the Bible says not a word, tho' so many grown children have held councils, and so many unhappy men have suffered on that account; I should civilly desire him, after having owned I did not understand, nor gave myself any concern about the matter, to trouble himself about his own business; and if he still persisted, I should take my leave of him.

This is the only principle, on which any thing determinate and equitable can be deduced from disputes about religion; and without which, every one laying down, on his part, the thing in question, nothing is agreed on, or understood; while religion, which ought to contribute to the happiness of mankind, is productive of their greatest evils.

But as religions grow old they lose sight of the object they had first in view; they increase in subtilties, while every thing is to be understood, explained, and determined; thus the doctrine grows daily refined, and the moral practices of it as constantly decay.

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There is undoubtedly a wide difference between the spirit of Deuteronomy and that of the Talmud ; between the spirit of the Gospel and the quarrels about the Constitution. St. Thomas asks, and determines it in the affirmative, Whether articles of faith do not multiply, by process of time ? That is to say, the successive professors, refining upon one another, come in time to know much more than hath been said by Jesus Christ and his Apostles. St. Paul ingenuously confesses, “ that he saw things, but as through a glass darkly, and in part.” Our Theologues have made a much greater progress ; they see every thing, know every thing ; they have cleared up all the obscurities of Scripture ; have determined what appeared indeterminate ; and have shewn us, with their usual modesty, that the sacred writers stood in great need of their assistance to become intelligible, and that the Holy Spirit knew not how to explain itself clearly without them.

When men have lost sight of their moral duties, to busy themselves only about the opinions and frivolous disputes of Priests, a Christian is no longer asked, if he believes in God, but if he be orthodox ? he is required to subscribe to a set form of useless and sometimes unintelligible tenets ; and when he hath so done, all is well, he is asked no farther questions. Provided he doth nothing to get himself hanged, he may live almost as he pleases ; his morals are nothing to the purpose, his belief is secure. When religion is come to this pass, of what use is it to society, or advantage to individuals ? It serves only to stir up

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dissentions,

dissentions, troubles, and quarrels, of every kind, among them; and to set them a cutting each others throats about the solution of ænigmas. Certainly it would be better to have no religion at all, than a religion so egregiously misapplied. Let us preserve it, if possible, from degenerating to that point, and be assured, in spite of chains and persecution, that you will do a meritorious service to mankind.

Let us suppose that, wearied out with such destructive quarrels, mankind should assemble to put an end to them, and agree about a religion adapted to the different people on earth. Every one would begin, undoubtedly, by proposing his own, as the only true, rational, and demonstrable religion; as the only one agreeable to God and useful to man: But his proofs would by no means confirm his persuasions, at least in the opinion of other sects. Each party would have no voice but its own. It is no less certain that all the others would unite against it. In this manner the deliberation might go round, one proposing, and all the rest rejecting; this would never be the way to come to an agreement. It is to be conceived, therefore, that after much time lost in such puerile altercations, men of sense would seek the means of conciliation. To this end, they would begin by banishing all professed divines from the assembly; nor would it be difficult for them to see how indispensable this preliminary step would be. This good work being done, they would say to the rest; till you can agree upon some one principle, it is im-

impossible you should even understand each other; and it is an argument by which no person ever was convinced, to say you are in the wrong because I am in the right. You say this is right, because it is agreeable to God; but this is precisely the very thing in question. If we knew what religion was most agreeable to him, there would be no farther dispute between us. You say that is right, because it is useful to mankind. This is quite another thing. Men may judge of this particular. Let us take this utility, therefore, as our guide; and proceed to establish those doctrines which are most conducive to it. We may thus hope to come as near the truth as it is possible: For it is to be presumed that, whatever is most useful to his creatures, must be most agreeable to the Creator.

“ Let us see, then, if there be any natural affinity between us; if there be any thing held in common by us all. Ye Jews, what think you of the origin of mankind? We think they are all the offspring of one common father. And, you Christians, what is your opinion on this subject? The same as that of the Jews. And you, Turks, what say you? We think the same as the Jews and Christians.---Very well, so far is good; and as men are all brothers, they ought undoubtedly to love each other as such.

“ But of whom, say you, did our common father receive his being? For he certainly did not make himself.—Of the Creator of heaven and earth. Jews, Turks, and Christians all agree in this; here is another great point gained.

gained. Again, of man, the work of this Creator, is he a simple or compound being? Is he formed of one substance, or of many? Answer, ye Christians! He is composed of two substances, the one mortal, and the other immortal.—And you Turks! We think the same.—And you Jews! We had formerly but confused ideas of this matter, as may be seen by the expressions of the sacred writings; but we have been since enlightened; and at present are of the same opinion as the Christians.”

In proceeding thus, by way of interrogatories, on divine providence, the life to come, and other matters essential to the peace of society, and the good of mankind; and having obtained almost uniform answers from every one, the querists would say to them (By the way, it is to be remembered that the Priests are banished the assembly;) “Wherefore, my friends, do you thus torment yourselves? You appear to be all agreed as to those points which are of consequence for you to know; and tho’ you may differ in sentiment as to other matters, I see very little inconvenience. Draw up a few articles of an universal religion, which may be called, if you will, the humane and social creed, and which every person living in society may be obliged to receive. And if any one should speak or write against it, he should be banished from society, as an enemy to its fundamental laws. As to those matters on which you are not all agreed, form of your particular creeds so many national religions, and profess them in sincerity and truth; but do not go on tormenting yourselves,

yourselves, in order to make other nations receive them, as you may rest assured God Almighty doth not require this at your hands. For it is as unjust to insist on subjecting others to your opinions as to your laws; missionaries appearing to me to be just as wise as conquerors.

“ In pursuing each your different doctrines, however, cease to imagine them so fully demonstrated, that those who do not look upon them in that light are insincere. Cease to believe, that all those who examine your proofs and reject their evidence, are for that reason obstinate Infidels, whose incredulity is criminal. Cease to think, that reason, a regard for truth, and sincerity are confined to yourselves. Do what we will, we are always induced to treat those as enemies, whom we accuse of wilfully resisting the force of evidence. We may lament their error, but we hate their obstinacy. Give the preference to your own reasons, if you will, but always remember that such as are not converted by them, may also have theirs.

“ Honour, in general, all the founders of your respective modes of worship. Let every one pay the reverence, which he conceives due to that of his own; but let him not despise those of others. They might be men of great genius and great virtues; and these are always respectable. They have declared themselves messengers from God; this might be, might or might not; it is a subject which the generality of mankind cannot judge of, in an uniform and consistent manner, the proofs of it not being

being equally adapted to the comprehension of all. But, tho' this be the case, they should not be hastily treated as impostors. Who knows how far continual meditations on the Deity, or the enthusiasm of virtue, may have disturbed, in the sublime imaginations, the mean and regular order of their common ideas. A too great elevation of mind sometimes turns the brain, and things are no longer seen in their ordinary light. Socrates himself imagined he had a familiar, but no one hath dared, on that account, to accuse him of being a knave. Shall we treat the founders of a whole people, the benefactors of nations, with less regard than a particular individual?

“ In a word, let there be no more disputes among you, about the preference due to your several religions. They are all good, when they are established by law, and contain what is essential to your happiness. The form or mode of worship, is the police of religions, and not its essence, and it belongs to the Sovereign of every country to regulate it.”

I have thought, my Lord, that a person, who should reason thus, would not be, therefore, a blasphemer, or impious; but that the conciliatory expedient he might thus propose, would be just, rational, and useful to mankind. I did not think, also, that it would prevent his having a particular religion or mode of worship, any more than other people, or his being as sincerely attached to it. A true believer, knowing that an infidel is also a man, and probably an honest one, may, without a crime, interest himself in his fate.

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He may justly prevent the introduction of any foreign mode of worship in his country ; but let him not consign to damnation all those who think differently from himself ; for whoever pronounces so rash a judgment, becomes a professed enemy to the whole human race. I am constantly told, that civil toleration should be admitted, but not a theological : for my part, I am of a contrary opinion, and believe that a good moral man, be his religion what it will, may be saved. But I do not, for that reason, think it lawful to introduce foreign modes of worship in any country, without the permission of its Sovereign : For tho' it may not be directly to disobey God, it is to disobey the laws, and disobedience to the laws is disobedience to God.

With regard to such religions as are once established or tolerated in any country, I conceive it is both cruel and unjust to suppress them by violence, and that the Sovereign is his own enemy, who injures the religious sectaries of his country. There is a wide difference between embracing a new religion, and professing that in which we are born and bred : It is the first only that can in any shape be criminal. One ought neither to establish a diversity of religions, nor suppress those which are once established : For a son cannot be to blame in adopting the religion of his father. All the arguments in behalf of public tranquillity make against the advocate for persecution. Religion never causes any troubles in a state, unless when
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the prevailing party would oppress the weak, or when the weaker party, being of a persecuting spirit, cannot live in peace with any other. But no lawful worship, that is to say, a worship comrehending any thing of the essence of religion, the professors of which require of course nothing but peace and toleration, ever gave rise to rebellions or civil wars; unless when it was forced to act in its own defence and repel its persecutors. Never did the Protestants, for instance, take up arms in France, unless when they have been persecuted. Had they been permitted, they would have been contented to live in peace and quiet. I must frankly confess, indeed, that the reformed religion had at first no right of establishment in France contrary to the laws. But when, transmitted from fathers to children, it became that of a considerable part of the French nation, and the Prince had solemnly treated with this party in the edict of Nantz; that edict became an inviolable contract, which could not be annulled without the joint consent of both parties: So that ever since that time, the profession of the protestant religion is, in my opinion, lawful in France.

Indeed, were it not so, the subject should surely be left at liberty to chuse the alternative of leaving the kingdom with his effects, or of remaining, on condition of his conforming to the established religion. But to compel them to stay, and yet refuse to tolerate them; to insist on their existence and annihilation at the same time; to deprive them of th

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common privilege of nature, to annul their marriages*, to declare their children bastards. ---But hold, I shall say too much, in speaking the truth here.

I may venture to observe, however, that it might be political to deprive the *French* Protestants of their chiefs: But the government should have stopped there. Political maxims have their applications and distinctions. In order to prevent dissentions, which there is no longer any just reason to fear, the government hath deprived itself of very considerable resources of which it stood

* In an arret of the Parliament of Toulouse, concerning the affair of the unfortunate *Calas*, the Protestants are reproached with intermarrying with each other; *marriage being, according to the Protestants, an act merely civil, and of course, subject, both in its form and effects, to the will and pleasure of the King.* So because marriage is reckoned by the Protestants a civil act, it must follow that they are obliged to submit to the will of the King, who makes it an act of the Roman Catholick religion. Thus the Protestants, to be legally entitled to marry, are obliged to become Catholics, notwithstanding, according to them, it is an act purely civil. Such is the logic of Messrs. the Parliament of Toulouse. ---The kingdom of France is so very extensive, that the French imagine the whole human race should have no other laws then theirs. Their Parliaments and tribunals appear to have no idea of the law of nature and of nations; and it is very remarkable, that in all this great kingdom, in which are so many Universities, Colleges and Academies, wherein are taught so many frivolous arts and sciences, there is not one professor of natural law among them. The French are the only people in Europe who have looked on this study as useless.

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in great need. What hurt can a party do, in such a kingdom as *France*, which hath neither great men nor nobility at their head? Examine into all your preceding wars, called religious, and you will find them to have taken their rise at court, and amidst the cabals of the great. When the intrigues of the cabinet had embroiled publick affairs, the chiefs excited the people in the name of the Lord. But what intrigues, what cabals can be formed by a parcel of tradesmen and peasants? By what means can they form a party, in a country that contains nothing but servants and masters, and in which equality of condition is either unknown or looked upon with honour? A tradesman proposing to raise troops might be listened to in *England*, but would set every body laughing in *France* *.

If I were a King---No---a Minister---still less; but if I were a man in power in *France*, I should say; every one among us is ambitious of posts, employments; every one is for purchasing the power to do ill; *Paris* and the court swallow up every thing. Let

* The only situation in which a people, thus destitute of chiefs will take up arms, is that of despair, to which being reduced by their persecutors, they have no other choice than in the manner of their destruction. In which case, the world beholds with astonishment, the power which a contemptible party may deduce from their despair; a circumstance which persecutors never have calculated before hand. And yet these wars have occasioned so much bloodshed, that they ought seriously to think of the consequence before they render them inevitable.

us leave these poor people to fill up the void of the Provinces ; but let them be tradesmen and always tradesmen, labourers and always labourers. Not being able to emerge from their situation, they will make the most of it. They will supply the place of our people, in those conditions of life which we all aspire to get out of ; they will make commerce and agriculture flourish, which we abandon ; they will furnish out our luxury ; they will labour, and we shall reap the fruits of it.

If this project would not be more equitable than those which are now pursued, it would at least be more humane, and undoubtedly more useful. It is less the tyranny and ambition of the great than their prejudices and confined views, which are so injurious to the common people of all nations.

I will conclude what I have to say on this subject, by transcribing a short discourse which bears some relation to it.

A Parsi of Suratte having secretly married a Turkish woman, was discovered, seized, and, having refused to embrace Mahometanism, was condemned to death. Before he went to execution, he addressed his Judge, in the following manner :

“ Will you, then, take away my life ? For what crime is it you punish me ? I have rather transgressed my own law than yours : My law speaks to the heart, and is without cruelty ; my crime hath been punished by the censure of my brethren. But what have I done to you deserving of death ? I have behaved to you as if you were of my family, and have

have chosen a sister from among you. I have left her to her own faith, and, for her own interest, she hath respected mine. Confining myself willingly to her alone, I have honoured her as the instrument of that worship which the author of my being requires, and have by her means paid that tribute which every man owes to his species. Love bestowed her on me, and virtue hath endeared her to me; she hath not lived in a state of servitude, but hath entirely possessed the heart of her husband; my fault hath made her no less happy than myself. To expiate so venial a crime, however, you would have had me turn liar and impostor; you would have compelled me to profess your sentiments, without respecting or believing them; as if the violator of our laws deserved to be subjected to yours, you have offered to my choice perjury or death, and I have chosen the latter, for I will not deceive you. I die, then, since it must be so; but I die worthy to revive and reanimate the body of another just man. I die a martyr to my religion, without fear of changing it after death for yours. May I come again to the Mahometans to teach them to become humane, merciful, and just: For serving the same God as we do, as there are not two Gods, you are blinded by your zeal to torment his servants, and are only sanguinary and cruel, because you are inconsistent.

“ You are mere children, that in your play are capable only of doing mischief to mankind. You imagine yourselves wise,
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and you know nothing of God. Can your new-fangled tenets be agreeable to him, who exists and hath been adored from all eternity? How can such a modern people speak of the religions established before them? Our rites are as old as the stars in the Firmament: The first rays of the sun lighted up and received the homage of our fore-fathers. The great Zerduſt beheld the infancy of the world; he foretold and described the order of the universe: And yet you, ye men of yesterday, you would set yourselves up to be our Prophets. Twenty ages before Mahomet, before the birth of Iſmael or his father, the Magi were of ancient standing. Our sacred books had given law to Asia and the world, while three great Empires had successively flourished and passed away under our ancestors, before yours had existence.

“Such, ye prejudiced mortals, is the difference between you and us. You call yourselves believers and you live like barbarians. Your institutions, your laws, your religion, nay, even your virtues, serve only to vex and debase human nature. The duties you prescribe are all gloomy and painful. Such are your fastings, self-denial, stripes, mutilations, and seclusion; ye know not how to lay yourselves under any obligations but such as are attended with affliction and restraint. You make men hate life, and the means of their preservation; your women are without men, your lands without cultivation; you devour the brute creation, and massacre the human; you delight in blood and cruelty, and by
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means of the twofold yoke of fanaticism and despotic power, impose customs that are destructive to our species and shocking to nature.

“As to us, we are men of peace; we neither do, nor wish, ill to any thing that breathes, not even to our tyrants themselves: We give them, without reluctance, the fruits of our labour, contented to be useful to them and to discharge our own duty. Our numerous herds still cover your pastures; the trees we plant, afford you fruit and shade; your lands, which we cultivate, supply you with nourishment by our means; a simple and harmless people increase and multiply under your oppression, and draw from the bosom of our common mother that plenty and abundance which you could not have procured for yourselves. The sun, which lights us at labour, is a witness of our patience and your injustice; when it rises, it finds us constantly employed in well doing, and when it sets it attends us home to our families, there to prepare ourselves for new labour.

“The truth is known only to God. If, notwithstanding all this, therefore, we are deceived in our religion, it is hardly to be believed that we shall be condemned to Hell; we, who are employed only in doing good upon earth; and that you should be of the number of the elect, and chosen of God, who do nothing but ill. But, supposing we are really in an error, you ought to shew it some respect, for your own advantage. Our piety makes you fat, and yours makes you lean;

lean; thus we repair the mischiefs which are done you by a destructive religion. Believe me, you had better let us enjoy our own opinions, which are so useful to you; there being just reason to fear, that if we should adopt yours, it would prove the greatest evil that could happen to you."

I have thus endéavoured, my Lord, to give you an idea of that spirit, in which the Savoyard's creed was written, and of those considerations which induced me to publish it. On which, I now take the liberty to ask you, in what respect can you call his doctrines blasphemous, impious, or abominable? and what you find in it so scandalous and pernicious to mankind? I ask the same of those who have charged me with publishing what I ought to have kept secret, and with the intention of disturbing the public peace and good order of society; a vague and impertinent imputation, with which those, who reflect least on what is useful or hurtful, excite the credulous public against a well meaning author. To recal people to the true faith which they have thrown aside, is this to teach them to believe nothing? To advise every one to submit to the laws of their country, is this to disturb the peace and good order of society? Do I write against all religious worship, by exhorting every people to abide by the established modes of their country? Do we deprive a man of what he has, by advising him not to change it? Is the paying a respect to every religion, making a mock of all religions? In a word, is it so essential to the professors of each, to hate one another, that,

if that hate be removed, religion itself is abolished?

Yet this is what the people are told, by those who are in power, when the public odium is to be excited against the advocate for truth. So now, ye cruel persecutors, your arrets, your mandates, and your journals, exasperate and abuse the public on my account. On the credit of your clamours the world conceives me a monster of wickedness: Your clamours, however, will, sooner or later, subside, and my writings will remain to your shame. The more moderate Christians will search them, with astonishment, for those horrid sentiments you pretend to find there, and will only see the morals of their divine master mixed with lessons of peace, concord, and charity. May they learn thence to be more just than their fathers! May the virtues they gather from thence avenge me one day of your maledictions!

With regard to such objections, as relate to the particular sects into which the world is divided, would I could give them sufficient force, to make every one less opiniated of his own, and less an enemy to others; to induce every one to be indulgent and candid, from the natural and striking consideration, that if he had been born in a different country, or among a different sect, he would have infallibly taken that for error which he now takes for truth, and that for truth which he now takes for error! It is of so much consequence to mankind to regard less the opinions, which serve to divide, than those which unite them!

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On the contrary, by neglecting what they approve in common, they are embittered against each other, on account of their particular sentiments; sticking most for those opinions which seem the most unreasonable, while every one supplies with confidence that authority which reason refuses. Thus, while we are all agreed at the bottom about every thing which is truly interesting, and of which we take little notice, we spend our lives in disputation, in quarrelling, and in persecuting each other, on account of those things we understand the least, and which it is least necessary for us to understand. Decisions after decisions are made to no purpose, and their contradictions palliated in vain by an unintelligible jargon; we find every day new questions to resolve, and new subjects to quarrel about; because every doctrine hath infinite branches, and because every body, full of the importance of his petty refinement, believes that to be essential which is not so, and neglects what really is so. Hence, if any one proposes objections which they cannot resolve, which, on account of the perplexity of their doctrines, becomes every day more easy to do, they are as fretful as children; and because they are more attached to their party than to the truth, and have more pride than sincerity, the less they are able to prove, the less are they disposed to pardon any doubt.

My own history may serve to shew, better than any other, the judgment we ought to form of our modern Christians; but as this would say more of them than is credible, it

may, perhaps, one day give rise to an opinion directly opposite ; that which is now the opprobrium of my contemporaries may be their glory ; when the well meaning reader of my work shall cry out in the simplicity of his heart, “ What heavenly times must those have been when such a book as this was burnt as impious, and its author prosecuted as a malefactor ! Doubtless, the productions of that age must have breathed the most sublime devotion, the whole earth must have been covered with Saints ! ”

But other books will likewise remain. It will be known, for example, that the same age produced a panegyrist on the feast of St. Bartholomew, a Frenchman, and, as it may well be believed, an Ecclesiastic, without exciting either Parliament or Prelate against him. Then, indeed, by comparing the morals of the two books, and the crimes of their respective authors, the language of the world might be changed, and a different conclusion drawn.

Those are abominable doctrines which excite people to injustice, to murder, and fanaticism. For what can be more abominable than to reduce violence and injustice to a system, and to deduce them from the mercy of God ? I shall abstain here from drawing a parallel that may displease you. So far, however, your Lordship will agree with me, that if France had professed the religion of the Savoyard Priest, a religion so pure and simple, inculcating the fear of God and the love of man, your fields would not have so often been dyed with blood ; a people so gay and agreeable would not have
astonished

astonished the rest of mankind with their cruelties in so many massacres and persecutions, from the time of the inquisition of Toulouse* to the feast of St. Bartholomew; the Counsellor Du Bourg would not have been gibbeted, for having given his opinion in favour of the Protestants; the inhabitants of Merindol and the Cabrieres had not been put to death by an arret of the Parliament of Aix; nor in our own times the unhappy Calas been put to the torture and expired on the wheel, for a crime of which he could not be guilty. But we shall now return, my Lord, to your censures, and the reasons on which you found them. It is always men, says the Curate, who tell us the word of God, and who tell us it also in unknown tongues. On the contrary, we often stand in great need of God to ascertain the word of men; it is, at least, certain he might have given us his own word, instead of making use of such suspected instruments. The Curate complains that so much human testimony is requisite to ascertain the divine word:

* It is true that St. Dominic, a Spanish Saint, bore a considerable part in this Inquisition. This Saint, according to a writer of his Order, had so much charity, in preaching against the Albigenses, to unite himself to certain devout persons, who, being zealous for the faith, took care to extirpate those heretics, by the material sword, who could not be subdued by the sword of the spirit.---This kind of charity little resembles that of our good Curate, and was, indeed, differently rewarded. The professors of the one are persecuted, while those of the other are canonized.

How many men are they, says he, between God and me.

To this you reply: "To justify this complaint, my dear brethren, we ought to be able to affirm that a revelation must be false, when it is not made to every individual; we ought to be able to say, that God cannot require us to believe any thing he has said, unless he had particularly addressed himself to us."

On the contrary, however, this complaint is justifiable only by admitting the truth of revelation. For if you suppose it false, what complaint have you a right to make against the means God hath made use of, when he hath confessedly made use of none? Ought he to account to you for all the abuses of an impostor? When you permit yourselves to be duped, it is your fault, and not his. But if God, doubtless at liberty to use his own means, hath given the preference to those which require on our part so much erudition, and such profound investigation, is the Curate to blame to wish, "That, being always reduced to the necessity of examining, comparing, and verifying the evidence, God had deigned to have saved him all that trouble; should he have served him with a less willing heart?"

Your minor, my Lord, is so admirable that I shall transcribe it verbatim. I am indeed fond of making use of your own words; this is my greatest partiality. "But is there not an infinite number of facts even prior to that of the Christian revelation, of which it would be absurd to doubt? Now by what means do we acquire the knowledge of these facts but by

by human testimony? By what other means did our author himself become acquainted with Sparta, with Athens, and with Rome, on whose laws, manners, and heroes he lavishes such extravagant encomiums? What a number of men between him and even the historians that transmitted to him an account of those events.

If the subject were less serious, or had I less respect for your Lordship, this manner of reasoning would furnish me with an opportunity of diverting my readers; but God forbid that I should forget what is due to the subject I am treating, or to the persons whom I address. At the hazard, therefore, of being flat and insipid in my reply, I shall content myself with barely pointing out your error.

You will please to consider, then, that it is perfectly consistent with the order of things, that human facts should be attested by human witnesses. They cannot be confirmed by any other means; for how should I know that Sparta and Rome ever existed unless by means of contemporary authors: Now between me and authors, who lived so far distant from me, there must necessarily be intermediate communicants: But where is the necessity of any such between God and me, and wherefore at least such as lived at so great a distance of place and time, that they must stand in need of so many others? Is it simple or natural that God should have made choice of Moses to speak to John James Rousseau.

Add to this, that no one is obliged, under pain of damnation, to believe that Rome or

Sparta have existed ; nor is any one consigned to eternal flames for having doubted it. Every fact, of which we are not eye-witnesses, must gain credit with us from the moral evidence of its truth, and all moral evidence is capable of a greater or less degree of certitude. Can I believe, therefore, that divine justice will cast me for ever into hell, merely for not determining exactly the point at which such evidence becomes irrefragable ?

There is not an historical fact in the world more fully attested, than that of the Vampires. It is confirmed by regular information, certificates of Notaries, Surgeons, Vicars, and Magistrates. And yet, with all this, who believes in the Vampires ? And shall we be all damned for not believing ? However well attested, even in the opinion of the incredulous Cicero, are many of the prodigies related by Livy, I cannot help regarding them as so many fables, and certainly am not the only person who doth so. My constant experience, as well as that of mankind in general, is much more convincing in this respect than the testimony of individuals. If Sparta and Rome were in themselves prodigies, they were prodigies of the moral kind ; so that we should be like the Laplanders, who fix the natural stature of man at four foot, if we should circumscribe the human mind, within the standard of those little souls which exist in modern times.

You will please to remember, my Lord, that I go on to examine your arguments in themselves, without defending those you have contraverted. After this necessary intimation,
I will

I will take the liberty to make another supposition on your method of argumentation.

I will suppose that an inhabitant of St. James's Street, should address himself to the Archbishop of Paris, in the following manner: "I know, my Lord, that you neither believe in the beatification of St. John de Paris, nor in the miracles which it pleased God to work openly on his tomb, in the sight of the most enlightened and numerous multitude. I think it my duty, therefore, to assure you, that I myself saw that Saint in person rise up from the place where his bones were deposited."

To this, we will suppose, he adds a detail of these particular circumstances, which would be most striking to the spectator of such a fact. I am persuaded that, on receiving this piece of information, you would begin your reply by enquiring into the situation, and sentiments of the informant; concerning his confessor, and other matters of that kind; and when you had comprehended, both by his manner and discourse, that he was a poor mechanick, who could not produce his certificate of confession, you would be confirmed in the opinion of his being a Jansenist. In which case, you would doubtless answer him in a tone of raillery: "Ay, ay, my friend, you are a convulsionary, and have seen the resurrection of the Abbé Paris? It is not at all surprising in you, who have seen so many other miracles."

In reply to this, I go on to suppose, he persists in the truth of his relation. He will tell you, that he was not alone when he saw

this miracle; that there were two or three persons with him who saw the same thing, and that others, to whom he had spoken of it, assured him also they themselves had seen the same. On this, you would ask him if all these witnesses were Jansenists too? "Yes, my Lord, they were; but this is no matter; they are sufficient in number, of irreproachable manners, of great good sense, and in every respect unexceptionable; the proof is complete, and nothing is wanting to our declaration to ascertain the veracity of the fact."

Some less charitable Bishops might send for a commissary, and consign the honest man, who had been honoured with this extraordinary vision, to the hospital for lunatics. But you, my Lord, more humane, without being more credulous, would content yourself, after giving him a serious reprimand, to dismiss him thus: "I know that two or three witnesses, of good morals and common sense, are sufficient to attest the life or death of a man; but I know not how many are requisite to confirm the resurrection of a Jansenist. Go, then, my friend, and till I know this, endeavour to rectify and compose your brain. I dispense with your fasting; and here is something to buy you a good dinner."

This, my Lord, is nearly what you would say to him, and what every other sensible man would say, in the same case. Hence I conclude, as well from your Lordship, as from every other man of sense, that the moral proofs, sufficient to ascertain the facts which are in the order of possibilities, are not sufficient to ascertain
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tain facts of a different order, or those which are supernatural: On which I leave you to judge of the justice of your comparison. And yet, the following is the exulting inference you bring forth against me: "The scepticism of our author, therefore, with regard to this particular, is evidently founded on nothing but the interests of his own infidelity."

If my infidelity, my Lord, should ever procure me a Bishoprick, worth an hundred thousand livres per annum, you might then talk of the interests of my infidelity.

I proceed to transcribe your remarks; taking the liberty only of restoring, when necessary, those passages of my book which you have omitted.

"What if a man, (says he a little further) should come and harangue us in the following manner: *I come, ye mortals, to announce to you the will of the Most High; acknowledge in my voice, that of him, who sent me. I command the Sun to move backwards, the Stars to change their places, the Mountains to disappear, the Waves to remain fixed on high, and the Earth to wear a different aspect.*" Who would not, at the sight of such miracles, immediately attribute them to the Author of Nature?—"Who would not think, my dear brethren, that a writer, who speaks in this manner, wanted only to be witness to a miracle to become a Christian?"—You might have said still more, my Lord, as I do not even stand in need of miracles to be a Christian.

"But hear what he says farther; "The most important examination, after all, re-

mains to be made into the truth of the doctrine delivered; for as those who say that God is pleased to work these miracles, pretend that the Devil sometimes imitates them, we are no nearer than before, tho' such miracles should be ever so well attested. As the Magicians of Pharaoh worked the same miracles, even in the presence of Moses, as he himself performed by the express command of God; why might not they, in his absence, pretend, on the same proofs, to the same authority? Thus, after proving the truth of the doctrine by the miracle, you are reduced to prove the truth of the miracle by the doctrine, lest the works of the Devil should be mistaken for those of God. What is to be done in this case? There is but one step to be taken, and that is to recur to reason, and leave miracles to themselves: Better indeed had it been, never to have had recourse to them†."

That is as much as to say, continues your Lordship, shew me a miracle and I will believe. Yes, my Lord, it is as much as to say, shew me a miracle and I will believe in miracles. And again, *yet when you have shewn me a miracle, I will not believe.* Yes, my Lord, it is saying, agreeable to the precept of Moses, that tho' a miracle be shewn me, I will not therefore believe in any absurd or unreasonable doctrine, it may be calculated to support.

† I have been obliged here, after his Lordship's example, to confound the text and the notes. The reader may consult both by turning to Emilius, vol. iii. page 113.

I should

I should sooner believe in the power of magick than acknowledge the voice of God in such injunctions as contradict my reason.

I have said, that the plainest arguments of common sense, might in this particular, be obscured and perplexed by subtle distinctions: This is also one of my predictions; of which the following passage is the accomplishment.

“ When a doctrine is acknowledged to be divine, and to be founded on the truth of positive revelation, we make use of it, indeed, to judge of miracles; that is, to reject the pretended prodigies which impostors may set up against such doctrine. When the point in question is an intire new doctrine, which is said to be dictated by the spirit of God, miracles are produced as proofs of it; that is to say, the person who assumes the character of a missionary from the most High, confirms his mission and the doctrines he preaches by miracles, which are the testimony of God himself. Thus the doctrine and the miracles are made use of respectively, according to the different points of view, in which they are placed, in the study or illustration of religion. But in this there is no abuse of argument, ridiculous sophistry, or absurd reasoning in a circle.”

Of this I leave the reader to judge. For my part, I shall not add a syllable. I have sometimes replied to your arguments by others of my own; but shall here leave you to be answered by yourself.

Where then, my good brethren, is that philosophical candour and sincerity of which this writer makes so great a boast?

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In answer to this question, my Lord, I can only reply, that I never piqued myself on any philosophical sincerity, for I know of no such thing. Nay, I cannot say much in favour even of christian sincerity, while the professed Christians of our own times take it so ill, that we do not suppress every objection they are not able to remove. But for pure candour and simple sincerity, I may boldly ask, whether yours or mine are more evident in the case before us.

The farther I advance, the more interesting is the subject between us; I must therefore continue to transcribe your Mandate: in a discussion of so much importance I should not omit even a single word.

Will it be believed that, after having taken the greatest pains to invalidate the human testimony of the Christian revelation, the same author should pay it the most solemn and positive deference imaginable?

There would, doubtless, be a reason for it; as I hold every doctrine to be revealed, in which I acknowledge the traces of the divine spirit. It is requisite only to render your expression less equivocal. If, by saying a deference to it, you mean the christian revelation, you are in the right; but if you mean to the human testimony of it, you are certainly wrong. But be this as it will, I appeal to your testimony against those who pretend that I reject all revelation; as if to confess that a doctrine is attended with difficulties insuperable for the human understanding, is to reject it; and as if the not admitting it upon human testimony were

were to reject it, when there are other equivalent or superior proofs, on account of which that may be well dispensed with.

To convince you of this strange inconsistency, and at the same time to serve for your edification, my dear brethren, I shall cite the passage wherein he hath done this in the plainest terms.

“ I will confess to you, says he, that the majesty of the scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the Gospel * hath its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of our Philosophers with all their pomp of diction: How mean, how contemptible are they, compared with the scripture! Is it possible that a book, at once so simple and sublime, should be merely the work of man? Is it possible that the sacred personage, whose history it contains, should be himself a mere man? Do we find that he assumed the tone of an enthusiast or ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in his manners! What an affecting gracefulness in his delivery! What sublimity in his maxims! What profound wisdom in his discourses! What presence of mind, what subtilty, what truth in his replies! How great the command over his passions! Where is the man, where the Philosopher, who could so live and so die, without weakness and without ostentation?

* The Archbishop having transcribed this passage somewhat incorrectly, in his Mandate, Mr. Rousseau rallies him for his inaccuracy. As the variation, however, is not of any importance, and depends in some measure on the idiom of the original, the translator thinks it unnecessary to particularize it.

When

* When Plato described his imaginary good man loaded with all the shame of guilt, yet meriting the highest rewards of virtue, he describes exactly the character of Jesus Christ: The resemblance was so striking, that all the Fathers perceived it.

“ What prepossession, what blindness must it be, to compare the son of Sophroniscus to the son of Mary? What an infinite disproportion there is between them? Socrates dying without pain or ignominy, easily supported his character to the last; and if his death, however easy, had not crowned his life, it might have been doubted whether Socrates, with all his wisdom, was any thing more than a vain sophist. He invented, it is said, the theory of morals. Others, however, had before put them in practice; he had only to say, therefore, what they had done, and reduce their examples to precept. Aristides had been *just* before Socrates defined *justice*; Leonidas had given up his life for his country before Socrates declared patriotism to be a duty; the Spartans were a sober people before Socrates recommended sobriety; before he had even defined virtue, Greece abounded in virtuous men, But where could Jesus learn, among his com-

* I have thought proper, as I came along, to fill up the breaks made by the Archbishop, not only to supply those omissions which he may have made with an insidious design, but also every other, as the want of connection frequently weakens the passage, and as my enemies are very solicitous to suppress every thing I have said in favour of religion.

petitors;

petitors, that pure and sublime morality, of which he only hath given us both precept and example. The greatest wisdom was made known amidst the most bigotted fanaticism, and the simplicity of the most heroic virtues did honour to the vilest people on earth. The death of Socrates, peaceably philosophising with his friends, appears the most agreeable that could be wished for; that of Jesus, expiring in the midst of agonizing pains, abused, insulted, and accused by a whole nation, is the most horrible that could be feared. Socrates, in receiving the cup of poison, blessed, indeed, the weeping executioner who administered it; but Jesus, in the midst of excruciating tortures prayed for his merciless tormentors. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates were those of a Sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God. Shall we suppose the Evangelic history a mere fiction? Indeed, my friend, it bears not the marks of fiction; on the contrary, the history of Socrates, which nobody presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty without obviating it: It is more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that one only should furnish the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality contained in the Gospel, the marks of whose truth are so striking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more astonishing character than the hero." * *It would be more*

* Emilius, vol. iii. p. 137.

difficult,

difficult, my dear brethren, to express a more explicit homage to the authenticity of the Gospel. I am obliged to you, my Lord, for this concession, as you are by so far less unjust than my other enemies. *And yet, say you, the author acknowledges it only in consequence of human testimony.* Here, my Lord, you are mistaken; I acknowledge such authenticity in consequence of the Gospel itself, and that sublimity which I find in it, abstracted from any moral evidence. I do not want any assurance that a Gospel exists, when I am myself in possession of it. *It is always men that report what other men have reported,* and nothing more; they do not report the existence of a Gospel; this I see with my own eyes; and should the whole world maintain that there is no such thing, I should be firmly convinced the whole world was mistaken. *What a number of men between God and him!* Not one. The Gospel itself determines this point, and this is in my own hands. By what means soever it came there, and by whomsoever written, I acknowledge in it the dictates of the divine spirit. This is as immediately present as possible; there are no human witnesses between this evidence and my own heart; the sense in which human testimony intervenes, regarding the history of this sacred book, its authors, the time when it was written, &c. all which points enter into those critical discussions in which moral evidence universally is admitted. Such is the reply of the Savoyard Curate.

Nothing

Nothing can be more evident, you say, than that the writer here contradicts himself, and is confuted on his own principles. Your Lordship is welcome to enjoy my confusion. — How strangely infatuated therefore is this author to add, “ And yet, with all this, the same Gospel abounds with incredible relations, with circumstances repugnant to reason, and which it is impossible for a man of sense either to conceive or admit. What is to be done amidst all these contradictions? Be modest and circumspect: Regard in silence* what cannot be either disproved or comprehended, and humble thyself before the Supreme Being, who only knows the truth. Such is the invo-

* In order that mankind should impose on themselves this respectful silence, it is requisite that somebody should give them for once the reasons for so doing. He, who is sensible of these reasons, may give them, but those who censure others without giving them, may as well be silent. To address the publick boldly and with frankness, is the right of every man, and even his duty on subjects of utility: But it is not right for one individual publickly to censure another; this is attributing to himself too great a superiority of virtue, and abilities. It is for this reason I have never taken upon me to criticise or reprimand any one. I have told the age, indeed, some harsh truths; and I have not been severe on individuals; but when I have occasionally contraverted or mentioned the writings of others, I have always spoken of living authors with the utmost tenderness and circumspection. The publick is witness of the return they have made me. Indeed, all those Gentlemen, who are so very forward and ambitious to teach me humility, appear to find this advice much easier to give than to take.

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luntary scepticism in which I remain." *But can this scepticism, my dear brethren, be indeed involuntary, when he refuses to admit the doctrines of a book, which, by his own confession, cannot be the work of man? when this book bears the marks of truth, so striking, so great, and so inimitable, that the inventor would be more astonishing than the hero of it? Surely we may here safely say, that iniquity hath belied itself.*

You charge me with iniquity, my Lord, without a reason; and often impute to me falsehood, of which you give no example? You will please to observe, I take a contrary method with you.

The scepticism of the Curate is involuntary for the very reason you give that it is not so. He would have rejected the Gospel, indeed, for the reasons before given, if supported only by those feeble authorities you would give it, and if that divine spirit which breathes in its morals and doctrines did not give it all that authority which human testimony must ever want in a matter of this kind.

He admits, therefore, of this sacred book, with all the admirable things it contains, and which the human understanding may comprehend: *But as to those incredible things which are repugnant to reason, and which it is impossible for a man of sense either to conceive or admit,* he regards them in silence without comprehending or rejecting them, and humbles himself before that Great Being, who only knows the truth. Such is his scepticism; and this scepticism must needs be involuntary, since it is founded on irrefragable proofs both on one
side

sides and the other, which force the understanding to remain in suspense. This scepticism is that of every rational and sincere Christian, who is desirous of knowing the things of Heaven only so far as he can comprehend them, of knowing those only which are of importance to his moral practice; rejecting, with the Apostle, all foolish and uninformative questions, which serve to engender strife.

You suppose me to reject revelation, in order to adopt natural religion; now I have not, in the first place, rejected revelation. After this, *you accuse me of not even admitting natural religion, or at least of not acknowledging the necessity of it.* And your only proof of it is in the following passage, which you quote for that purpose. “If I am mistaken, it is without design. This is sufficient to prevent my errors from being imputed to me as a crime. And tho’ you should be mistaken in the same manner, it is of very little consequence.” That is to say, continues your Lordship, “It is sufficient, according to this writer, to be persuaded you are in possession of the truth, in order that such persuasion, though attended with the most monstrous errors, should not be a subject of reproach; and that every man, who professes himself to be sincere and ingenuous, should be accounted religious and wise, tho’ adopting even the horrid doctrines of Atheism. Is not this throwing open the door to introduce all the modes of superstition, fanatical systems, and chimerical notions of the human mind.”

For

For your part, my Lord, I am persuaded, you cannot here say, with the Curate, *If I am mistaken, it is without design*. For it is very evident that it is with design, you are pleased to give into a mistake yourself, and then impose it on your readers. This, my Lord, I engage unanswerably to prove: And make this previous declaration, that you may be more attentive to what I say.

The profession of faith by the Savoyard Curate is composed of two parts. The first, which is the longest, of the greatest importance, and abounds most with new and striking truths, is intended to contravert the doctrines of modern materialism, and to confirm the existence of God and the principles of natural religion, with all the force the author's abilities would admit of. Neither your Lordship, nor the Priests, have taken any notice of this part, the subject of it being indifferent to you; for, in fact the cause of God affects you but little, provided the interests of the Clergy are secure.

The second part, much shorter, more irregular, and more superficial, contains certain doubts and difficulties relative to revelations in general; ascribing, however, to ours that real certitude which is evident in the purity and sanctity of its doctrines, and in that sublimity, altogether divine, which distinguished its great author. The design of this second part, is to make every one more moderate and reserved in the profession of his own religion, and in taxing others of different persuasions with insincerity; by shewing that the proofs

of

of the best were not so demonstrative as to authorise them to treat those as criminals who did not see so clearly as themselves. This second part, written modestly and with all possible respect, is that only which hath attracted the attention of your Lordship, and of the Magistrates. But you have nothing but persecution and abuse to offer in refutation of my arguments. You have weighed the evil consequences of doubting what is really doubtful; but you have not considered the good consequences of proving what is really true.

In fact, the first part, which contains every thing which is really essential to religion, is absolute and decisive. The author here neither deliberates nor doubts. Both his conscience and reason are fully determined; he believes, he affirms, and is most strongly persuaded of the truth of what is laid down.

As to the second part, he begins it, on the contrary, with declaring, that "the examination he is going to make is very different from the former; presenting to his view nothing but perplexity, mysteriousness and obscurity;" that no farther authority should be placed on his discourse than that of reason; that he was ignorant himself whether he was right or wrong, and that all his affirmations are only so many rational doubts.

He proposes, therefore, his objections, and difficulties. At the same time, also, he proposes the reasons and grounds of his belief: So that from the whole discussion there results a certitude in all the essential points of religion, and a respectful scepticism concerning

cerning the rest. Towards the end of the second part, he insists again on the circumspection with which he ought to be heard.

“ If I were more positive in myself, I should have assumed a more decisive and dictatorial air; but I am a man ignorant and subject to error. What can I do more? I have opened to you my heart without reserve: What I have thought certain I have given you as such; my doubts I have declared as doubts, my opinions as opinions; and have given you my reasons for both. It remains now for you to judge.”

When the author of that paper, therefore, says, “ If I am mistaken, it is without design; which is sufficient to prevent my errors from being imputed to me as a crime;” I will ask every reader of common-sense, and the least sincerity, whether it be on the first or second part that the suspicion must fall of his being in an error? Whether it must fall on that which he positively affirms to be true, or on that which he hesitates upon? Whether this suspicion relates to his falsely believing in a God, or his being in the wrong as to his doubts concerning revelation? You, my Lord, have declared the first; against all reason, and with the sole view of making me appear criminal; I may defy your Lordship to assign any other motive. Where then is, I will not say justice, or Christian charity, but your sense, and your humanity?

But, supposing you could have been mistaken as to the object of the Curate's suspicion
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in this case, the very passage you quote would have undeceived you, in spite of yourself. For, when he says, *This is sufficient to prevent my error from being imputed to me as a crime*, he acknowledges that such an error might be a crime, and might be imputed to him, if he were not sincere: But on the supposition that there is no God, where is the crime of believing there is one? And supposing it be a crime, who is to impute it to us? ~~The~~ fear, therefore, of being in an error, cannot relate to what is said of natural religion; the discourse of the Curate, being, in fact, a very strange heap of absurdities indeed, in the sense you have ascribed to it. It is then impossible to infer, from the passage you quote, either that *I do not admit of natural religion*, or that *I do not acknowledge its necessity*. It is still much less possible to infer from thence, *that every man who professes himself sincere and ingenuous, should be accounted religious, and wise, tho' adopting the horrid doctrines of Atheism*. I will add also, that it was equally impossible for you to think the inference, you thus drew, a just one. If this be not demonstrated, nothing can possibly be so, or I must be totally void of common understanding.

To shew that no divine mission can authorise a man to propagate absurdities, the Curate conceives a dispute to arise between a pretender to inspiration, whom you are pleased to stile a Christian, and a rationalist, whom you are pleased to call an unbeliever; these he supposes to talk in their own language, which he disapproves, and which is assuredly neither his

nor mine. On this head, you charge me with notorious partiality and insincerity, and you prove it by the foolishness of the discourse of the first of these characters. But if what he says, be so very foolish, why do you honour him with the name of Christian? And if the Rationalist refutes only futile assertions, what right have you to tax him with infidelity? Doth it follow, from the absurdities advanced by a pretender to inspiration, that he must be a Catholick, or from those which a Rationalist refutes that the latter must be an Infidel?

“ If reason and revelation contradict each other, you say, it is certain that God would contradict himself.” This is a very great confession, my Lord; for it is very certain that God cannot contradict himself. Again, *“ You tell us, ye impious Infidels, that the tenets which we look upon to be revealed, contradict eternal truths: But it is not sufficient for you merely to assert this. Certainly it is not; let us endeavour, therefore, to do something more.*

I dare say, you already foresee the point I aim at. Indeed, it is plain, you passed over this mysterious article as if you had walked on burning coals, on which you were afraid to trust your feet. You oblige me, however, to stop you for a moment, even in this painful situation. I shall be prudent enough, however, to detain you as little as possible.

You will agree with me, I imagine, that one of those eternal truths, which serve as the first principles of ratiocination, is, that *a part is less than the whole*; and it is for having affirmed the contrary that the Dogmatist appears
to

to you to talk foolishly and absurdly. Now, according to your doctrine of transubstantiation, when Jesus held his last supper with his disciples, and having broken bread, gave unto each of them his body, it is clear that he must hold his whole body in his hand; and if he eat of the consecrated bread himself, as he probably might, he must put his head into his mouth. Here then is a clear and sufficient proof that a part is greater than the whole, and that the thing containing is less than the thing contained. What say you to this, my Lord? For my part, I know nobody but the Chevalier de Caufans*, who can get you out of this difficulty.

I am not insensible, indeed, that you have the resource of St. Augustin; but that amounts to the same thing; this good father, after having piled up a heap of unintelligible arguments about the Trinity, very ingenuously confessing they had no meaning: But adds he, very frankly, *We express ourselves in this manner, not with the view of saying any thing, but only that we may not be totally silent* †.

Every thing considered, my Lord, I think the best method you can take with regard to this article, as well as many others, is that which you have already taken with M. de Montazet, and for the very same reason.

* A Gentleman, who undertakes to demonstrate various impossibilities.

† Dictum est tamen tres personæ, non ut aliquid diceretur, sed ne taceretur. *Aug. de Trinit. l. v. c. 9.*

“ *The insincerity of the author of Emilius is not less reprehensible in the language of his pretended Catholic.*” We Catholics, says he, make a great noise about the authority of the Church : But what do we gain by it, if it requires as many proofs to establish this authority as other sects require immediately to establish their doctrines ? The church determines, that the church hath a right to determine : Is not this a special proof of its authority ? “ Who would not think, my dear brethren, from the pretences of this impostor, that the authority of the church is to be proved only by its own decisions, and that it proceeds arbitrarily thus ; I determine that I am infallible, therefore I am infallible. A scandalous imputation ! My dear brethren.”— This, my Lord, is your assertion ; now let us examine your proofs. In the mean time, will you venture to affirm, that the Catholic Divines have never established the authority of the church, on that very authority itself, *ut in se virtualiter reflexam* ? If they really have done it, I lay on them no scandalous or calumnious imputation.

The constitution of Christianity, the spirit of the Gospel, and even the errors and weakness of the human understanding, all serve to demonstrate, that the church, established by Jesus Christ, is an infallible church. All this, my Lord, is vague and indeterminate ; these things, which you say serve to demonstrate, in fact demonstrate nothing. Let us proceed, therefore, directly to the substance of your demonstration. “ *We are assured that, as the divine legislator always instructed*

instructed mankind in the ways of truth, the church of Christ will ever do the same. But who are you that give us this as a sole and unanswerable proof? Are not you the church, or its heads? By the manner in which you argue, you seem to make yourselves very sure of the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Yet what is it you have said, and what says the impostor? You will examine this point yourselves; as I really have not the courage to do it.

I ought, however, to remark, that the force of the objection which you have thus attacked, lay in the words which you took care to suppress, toward the end of the passage here pointed at. *And yet, depart from this, and we enter into endless discussions* *. The Curate's argument, in plain terms, is this: To make choice of one religion out of several, says he, one of these two methods is requisite; either to hear the proofs of every different sect, and then compare them together; or to rely altogether on the authority of those who instruct us in such tenets. Now the first method requires such a degree of knowledge as few persons are in a state of acquiring, and the second would justify every one in professing the religion of the country where he was born. As an instance of this, he brings that of the Roman Catholics; in which the authority of the church is held sacred, and on that he establishes his second dilemma. Either the church arrogates to itself this authority, and says, *I determine that I am infallible, therefore*

* Emilius, vol. iii. page 127.

I am so; by which means it falls into the sophistical error of reasoning in a circle; or else it must prove that it received this authority from God; in which case, there is as great a multiplicity of proofs required to shew that the Romish church hath received this authority, as other sects require to establish directly the truth of their doctrine. No advantage, therefore, is gained in the way of instruction, nor are the people more capacitated to examine into the proofs of the authority of the church, among the Catholics, than into those of the doctrine among the Protestants. How then are they to determine in any reasonable manner, otherwise than by the authority of their instructors? But, granting this, the Turk will determine in the same manner; and how will he in that be more to blame than you? This, my Lord, is the argument, to which you have made no reply; and which I conceive, indeed, to be unanswerable*. But your Episcopal liberality hath extricated you from the difficulty, by disingenuously mangling the passage of the author.

* This is one of those terrible objections, which my opponents are very cautious of meddling with. Nothing is more easy than to reply by abuse and pious declamations. It is not very difficult to shift off what is embarrassing. Hence it must be confessed that the Divines have, in their contraverfies, many advantages, which they want, in disputing with the ignorant, and with whom they must make up the defect as well as they can. They can reciprocally amuse each other, by suppositions, which cannot be objected to by those who have themselves

Thank

Thank Heaven I have now finished this very painful task; in which I have pursued your arguments, quotations, and censures, step by step; having shewn, that as often as you have attacked my book, you have been in the wrong. There remains only the single article of government; I am very ready, however, to forgive every thing that may be said on this head; being very certain that when the man who groans under the miseries of a people, and himself experiences them, is accused by you of poisoning the sources of public felicity, every reader must be sensible of the weight of your arguments. If my treatise on the social compact did not exist, and it were necessary to prove a-new, the important truths which are there displayed, the compliments you pay to governments at my expence, would be one of the facts I should bring in proof of them; and the fate of the author, would be still a more striking one. There remains nothing more for me to say on this head; my own example hath said every thing, and the passion of private interest ought not to obscure useful truths. The decree that hath been issued against my person; the burning of my book by the common hangman; these

nothing better to offer. Of this nature is the expedient of I know not what kind of faith, which, in order to get rid of the difficulty, they oblige the Deity to transmit from father to son. This jargon, however, they reserve for their disputations with their own profession: Should they make use of them in their disputes with us profane cavillers, they would justly be afraid of being turned into ridicule.

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are the authentic pieces which I shall transmit to posterity in my justification ; my sentiments are not less confirmed by my writings than by my misfortunes.

Thus, my Lord, have I discussed every thing you have alledged against my book. I have not passed over one of your propositions without examination ; but have shewn you to be wrong in every particular, and am not in the least afraid any exception will be taken against my proofs : they must appear, indeed, unanswerable, to all persons of common-sense.

But supposing, after all, that I had been in some places mistaken, nay, if I had been mistaken throughout, surely a book might meet some indulgence, in which so sincere a love for virtue, and a real regard for truth, are manifested even in the midst of error, or the evil that may be found there ! Surely some indulgence is due to an author so little dogmatical and positive, that he often cautions his readers against trusting to his notions, advises them to weigh his arguments, and to give them no authority but that of reason ! A book that breathes nothing but peace, candour, patience, the love of harmony, and obedience to the laws in every thing, even in affairs of religion ! A book, in short, wherein the cause of God is so boldly defended, the utility of religion so firmly established, good manners so much inculcated and respected ; in which vice is disarmed of the weapons of ridicule, wickedness is described so void of sense, and virtue so truly amiable ! Were there not even one word of truth in the work, the reveries it contains ought, indeed to

to have been commended and encouraged, as the most pleasing and delightful chimeras that could be invented to sooth a heart of sensibility and virtue. Yes, I will be bold to say, that a government truly enlightened, a government whose views are truly salutary and useful, if such a one existed in Europe, would have done public honour, would have erected a statue, to the Author of *Emilius*. I know mankind too well, indeed, to expect so much gratitude from them; but I did not know enough of them to expect what hath really happened.

After having proved that you are unreasonable in your censures, it remains for me to prove that you have calumniated me by your abuses. But, as you abuse me only in consequence of the errors you impute to my book, when I shew that those pretended errors are yours, not mine, do I not in fact shew that the consequent abuses belong to yourself not to me? You load my work with the most odious epithets, and call me an abominable, rash, and impious impostor. What strange language doth christian charity dictate to the ministers of Jesus Christ!

But, pray, my Lord, what do you, who reproach me with blasphemy, when you make the Apostles your accomplices in that calumny which you are pleased to load me with? To hear you talk, one would imagine that St. Paul had done me the honour to think very particularly of me, and to predict my coming as that of Antichrist. And in what manner,
 pray,

pray, hath he predicted it? You tell us in the beginning of your mandate.

“ St. Paul, my dear brethren, hath foretold that perilous times should come, in which men should be lovers of themselves, proud, blasphemers unholy, false accusers, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than of God, men of corrupt minds, reprobates concerning the faith.”

I will not contend that this prediction of St. Paul is not fully accomplished ; but if he had foretold, on the contrary, that there would ever be a time when such people were not to be found, I must confess I should have been more struck with the prediction, and still much more so at its accomplishment.

After this prophecy, so remarkably well applied, you have the goodness to draw my portrait, in which your Episcopal gravity condescends to amuse itself with antitheses, and I find myself a very droll personage indeed. This part, my Lord, appears to me the best of your whole Mandate. It is certainly not very easy to write a more agreeable satire, or to defame a man with more wit and spirit. *A writer hath here started up* [not very high] *who, educated in the midst of error,* [it is very true, I was brought up in the Romish religion,] *is full of the language of Philosophy* [it is somewhat strange I should speak a language I do not understand] *tho' no true Philosopher.* [Oh ! granted; I shall never be ambitious of that title, to which I acknowledge I have no just pretensions ; nor do I renounce it, I assure you, out of modesty.] *Possessed of a multiplicity*
of

of knowledge [I have learned to be ignorant indeed, of a multiplicity of things which I imagined I knew] *which nevertheless hath not served to enlighten his understanding,* [it hath taught me not to think it enlightened,] *tho' he hath made use of it to darken the understanding of others.* [The darkness of ignorance is much better than the false light of error.] *He is given up to paradoxes both in opinion and practice;* [certainly he is a great loser by not thinking and acting like the rest of the world!] *uniting simplicity of manners with ostentation of doctrine,* [Simplicity of manners elevates the soul—as to ostentation of doctrine, I know not what is meant by it.] *A zeal for ancient maxims, with a passion for establishing the most singular novelties;* [there is nothing more new to us than ancient maxims;] *the obscurity of retirement with the desire of being known to the whole world.* [Here, my Lord, you perfectly resemble our Romance-writers, who know every thing their heroes said, or thought, even in their closets. If it were the desire of being known that made me take up the pen, how comes it that this desire influenced me so late, or that I delayed so long to gratify it?] *We have seen his invectives against those very sciences which he himself cultivated.* [This proves, that I do not imitate the generality of men of letters, and that in my writings I prefer the interests of truth to my own.] *We hear him acknowledge the excellence of the Gospel* [always, and with the greatest sincerity] *while he is endeavouring to depreciate its tenets.* [Not so; I would promote the charity it inculcates,

cates, which is almost suppressed by the Priests.] *We see him describing the beauty of virtue, at the same time that he is striving to extinguish the love of it, in the hearts of his readers.* [Is this true, ye honest and well meaning readers, have I extinguished in your hearts the love of virtue?]

He hath assumed the preceptorship of human kind, in order to deceive them; he hath erected himself into a public monitor, to lead the world astray; and hath played the oracle of the age, in order to compleat its destruction. [I have already examined your proofs of this.] *In a treatise on the inequality of mankind, he hath reduced man to a level with the brutes; [I will appeal to the reader, whether a man be debased most, by being accounted merely stupid or naturally wicked?]* *In another production still more recent, he hath insinuated all the poison of inordinate pleasure under pretence of prohibiting it.* [Oh! that I could but, indeed, substitute the real charms of pleasure instead of the false ones of debauchery! But be assured, my Lord, the clergy of your diocese are proof against *Eloisa*; they have got a preservative in *Aloisia* *.] *In the present he takes advantage of the earliest moments of life, to establish in the mind of man the maxims of irreligion and infidelity.* [This imputation hath been already examined and refuted.]

Such, my Lord, and even yet more cruel, is the manner in which you treat me; with

* An infamous, obscene book, well known in France.

whom

whom you are not acquainted, and of whom you know nothing but by hear-say. Is this behaviour dictated by that evangelical morality of which you pretend to be the defender? We will suppose you desirous of preserving your flock from the contagious principles contained in my book; but why should you, on this account, break out into personal abuse of the author? I know not what end you promise yourself by such unchristian-like conduct; but I know that, to defend one's religion by such means, is the way to render it very suspicious, among all honest, well meaning people.

And yet it is you who call me rash and presumptuous! Can I have deserved that appellation merely for proposing my doubts, and even that with the greatest modesty, without attacking or naming any one? In particular, my Lord, it ill becomes you to treat, in this manner, one whom you speak of with so little justice and decorum, and whom you so wantonly and so indecently abuse.

You treat me as impious; but of what impiety can you accuse me, who never speak of a Supreme Being but to render him the honours which are his due, nor of my neighbour but to excite every one to love theirs? The impious are those who unworthily profane the cause of God, in making him act subservient to the passions of men. The impious are those, who, setting themselves up for Interpreters of the divine will, the arbiters between God and man, exact to themselves those honours, which should be paid only to the Deity. The

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impious

impious are those who assume the right of exercising the power of God upon earth, and would open and shut the gates of Heaven at pleasure. The impious are those who order libels to be read in their churches—At this horrible idea my blood is all inflamed, and tears of indignation start from mine eyes. Ye Priests of the God of Peace, doubt not but ye will one day be called on to give an account of the use you have made his temples !

You treat me as an impostor ; and why ? I am in your opinion in an error ; but where is my imposture ? Is to reason and to be mistaken, an imposition ? Even a Sophist, who deceives others, without deceiving himself, is not an impostor, while he confines himself to the authority of reason, tho' he abuses it. An impostor desires to be credited on his own word ; he would even have it taken implicitly. An impostor is a knave who imposes on others for his own interest ; but pray, my Lord, what interest could I propose to myself in this business ? Impostors, according to Ulpian, are those who play delusive tricks, and use imprecations and exorcisms : Now, my Lord, I have never done any thing of this kind.

You men of place and dignity can talk away at your ease. Acknowledging no other prerogative than your own, no other laws than such as yourselves impose, you are so far from thinking yourselves under a necessity to be just, that you do not think yourselves obliged to observe the common rules of humanity. You proudly oppress the feeble, without being called to account, by any one
for

for your injustice ; and whenever your own interest or the policy of state requires it, you sweep us before you like the dust. Some pronounce sentence or burn, others dishonour and abuse, without right, without reason, without disdain, and even without anger ; but merely because they are on their route of business, and the unhappy wretch falls in their way. While you insult us with impunity, it is not even permitted us to complain ; but if we attempt to demonstrate our innocence and your injustice, we are still farther accused of wanting respect for you.

You, my Lord, have openly insulted me : I have proved that you have falsely aspersed my reputation. Were you a private man, as I am, that I might cite you to appear before an equitable tribunal, there to have a fair hearing, I, on the behalf of my book, and you with your Mandate, you would certainly be cast, and sentenced to make me a reparation as public as hath been the offence. But you, my Lord, are in so high a station, that you can easily dispense with being just : And I am nothing. As you profess the Gospel, however, as you are a Prelate, whose business it is to teach others their duty, you certainly know your own, in such a case. For my part, I have done mine, and have nothing farther to say.

I am, my LORD,

A *Motiers*,
Nov. 18, 1762.

With profound respect, &c.

J. J.-ROUSSEAU.



